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ABSTRACT

Instructional assessment is a systematic approach to solving student academic, behavioral, and social-emotional problems by identifying the key factors that have created or are encouraging the problem. The instructional support team (IST) process emphasizes assistance to students. Assessment in IST consists of ongoing analysis of student functioning through assessments conducted in a functional context within the regular classroom. This training manual provides the essential elements that should be covered in any training in instructional assessment. It is to be used in conjunction with other training manuals for the Instructional Support System of Pennsylvania (ISSP). The following chapters are included: (1) "Background and Assumptions for Instructional Assessment"; (2) "Instructional Assessment's Role"; (3) "Phases of the IST Process"; (4) "Instructional Assessment for Behavior and Student Assistance"; (5) "Overheads/Training Suggestions"; and (6) "Activities/ Training Suggestions." Appendixes discuss curriculum-based assessment questions and answers and academic learning time, and present a case study in assessment instruction. (Contains 65 references.) (SLD)

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The Instructional Support System of Pennsylvania

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REFERENCES

Acknowledgements

The instructional support team (IST) process emphasizes assistance to students in their regular class and home school. This process is important to parents, teachers, and all other school personnel. It helps to establish understanding, communication, and cooperation among all who are involved in the delivery of services to students.

Assessment in IST consists of an ongoing analysis of student functioning based on the student's curriculum, the student's classroom behavior, and/or an examination of the student's life stressors and coping skills. These assessments are conducted in a functional context within the regular classroom. Interventions are implemented as part of this assessment process with continuous monitoring of the student's responses to interventions - the goal being to determine what works.

This training manual provides the essential elements that should be covered in any training in instructional assessment. It is to be used in conjunction with other ISSP training manuals and Department of Education Guidelines for IST. Appreciation is extended to the following individuals for their contributions in developing this manual.

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The Training Module

Two training areas provide an umbrella for the instructional support team (IST) process: collaboration and instructional assessment. Collaboration provides structure to the support process by training building-based teams to share their expertise, solve problems, and work in concert on behalf of students who are at risk of school failure. The collaborative process also serves to enhance the instructional capabilities of the building staff as they share the responsibility for the learning of all students and as they purposefully communicate about how best to meet students' learning and instructional needs.

Instructional assessment provides teams with the tools for making decisions to guide the learning, curricular, and instructional needs of all students, and in particular, those students who are struggling in school. Its purpose is to help these students achieve success by improving the quality of their learning experiences and the quality of their instruction. This approach is consistent with current efforts to assess students on an ongoing basis in the context of the classroom, using natural materials for authentic purposes.

Instructional assessment is a systematic approach to solving student academic, behavior, and social-emotional problems by identifying the key factors that have created or are encouraging a problem. Identifying the key factors or conditions (i.e., instruction "variables") influencing the occurrence of a problem naturally leads to the identification of strategies that will likely solve the problem. In the IST process the team uses the principles and practices of instructional assessment through the four IST phases to specify the problem, operationalize the goal, test potential strategies, and measure the ongoing effectiveness of selected strategies. Systematic application of instructional assessment can provide the IST with reliable information about the most efficient and effective means to match school and classroom resources with student needs. Its effectiveness is enhanced by a team approach to problem solving where team procedures are designed to be both deliberative and collaborative, making it an approach that leads to positive outcomes for students and their teachers.

When necessary, the instructional assessment process also serves to screen students for special education consideration. In these specific cases, instructional assessment represents an ongoing, longitudinal, data-based process that parcels out the effects of poor instruction and program ineffectiveness from a student-centered disability. This distinction can only be undertaken by directly intervening in the learning environment of the classroom and by measuring the effects of the intervention on the student's performance (Kovaleski, Lowery & Gickling, 1995).

It should be noted that the term instructional assessment denotes those processes by which assessment is used to inform instruction. The term is distinguished from instructional evaluation as described in the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations and Standards. Instructional evaluation is a process by which the results of instructional assessment are evaluated to determine the student's rate of acquisition and rate of retention and the degree of need for specially designed instruction. While instructional assessment is a formative process that guides instruction, instructional evaluation is a summative one that is conducted as part of eligibility decision making.

Although the instructional support team process was initially developed to provide instructional assessment that is conducted during the provision of instructional support (prior to referral for multidisciplinary evaluation), these methods can also be understood as an essential aspect of effective special education for those students who have individual educational programs (IEPs). The day-to-day procedures of instructional assessment can and should be readily utilized in special education programs to insure that those programs are maximally effective. For a further discussion of the distinction of instructional assessment and instructional evaluation, the reader is referred to the article by Kovaleski, Lowery, and Gickling (1995) as well as the Instructional Evaluation Participant's Manual (IST Document #216).

This instructional assessment manual was developed to train school personnel in the instructional assessment process. Its purpose is to train school-based teams to use natural assessment and intervention techniques in building effective instructional programs for students who are at risk of school failure. This training is based on the belief that the most fundamental purpose of assessment is to guide decisions about curriculum and instruction. This practice must reflect the real intent of the instructional assessment process, which is to establish effective learning conditions and to manage those learning conditions so that each and every student can achieve success in school. This training incorporates effective learning principles and teaching practices for academic issues and also provides a structure for assessment and intervention in interpersonal and behavioral issues.

This manual serves as an organizer for and is complemented by other training materials produced by the Instructional Support System of Pennsylvania (ISSP) including the following:

- Guiding Mathematics Instruction through CBA (IST Document #202)
- Guiding Reading Instruction using CBA (IST Document #203)
- Reading, Writing Instruction and the CODE (IST Document #204)
- IST Reading/Writing Comprehension Strategies (IST Document #205)
- Elementary Student Assistance Trainer's Manual (IST Document #207)
- IST for Students who are Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse (IST Document #218)
- PDE Guidelines: Effective Behavioral Support

The reader is referred to these documents and training materials for a more complete understanding of instructional assessment as it applies to specific content areas.

Meaningful Changes in Educational Assessment

The most meaningful changes occurring in educational assessment today represent a return to those principles and practices which are instructionally relevant. Such changes require bringing assessment back into the classroom and returning the curriculum to a prominent role in the assessment and instructional process, thus the origin of the term "instructional assessment". This approach is consistent with the *Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing* (1994) which state that "Assessment must reflect and allow for critical inquiry into curriculum and instruction" (p. 17). To be meaningful, the assessment process must reflect the complexities of the curricula being taught as well as how it is being taught.

Basic to these changes is the belief that it is as important to determine *how* students learn, including the thinking process they used to guide their learning, as it is to determine *what* they learn. This belief has resulted in a number of fundamental changes with regard to how assessment should impact instruction and how instruction can be delivered more effectively and efficiently to students who are at risk of academic failure. In consideration of these fundamental changes in educational assessment, this training manual has been developed to support training in which participants will accomplish the following goals: (OVERHEAD #1)

1. Develop a foundation for instructional assessment.
2. Use assessment to guide decisions about curriculum and instruction.
3. Apply principles of effective instruction to produce effective learning conditions for students who are at risk of academic failure.
4. Apply principles of elementary student assistance, effective communication, and functional assessment in the context of instructional assessment for students who are experiencing school adjustment difficulties.
5. Match appropriate strategies to areas needing instructional support.

As a training guide, this manual provides the essential elements and a training base for instructional assessment in the IST process.

Trainers are encouraged to study the information, training tools, and resources to develop workshops which focus on these goals. The specific training sequence, overheads, and activities are offered as models, with the understanding that trainers often design their own tools to convey the message content.

CHAPTER

1

BACKGROUND & ASSUMPTIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Rationale

This chapter provides IST trainers with an interpretation of the connections between federal and state legislation and their intent as they relate to evaluation practices and the provision of special education eligibility. Furthermore, it provides a starting point for understanding the limitations of traditional educational evaluation practices and the current emphasis on instructional assessment and intervention.

Certain basic assumptions have influenced the thinking and guided the practices in instructional assessment. They are included at the beginning of this manual to establish the foundation for the systematic instructional assessment procedures of the IST process. These assumptions have helped to maintain consistency in instructional assessment practices and have provided the underlying principles for related education legislation and public policy.

Instructional Assessment Assumptions

1. Instructional assessment can be used for all students in any setting.
2. Instructional assessment is a collaborative inquiry/problem-solving process.
3. Instructional assessment is systematic and proceeds through overlapping phases within the IST process.
4. Instructional assessment decisions are based on analysis of ongoing data collection.
5. The best way to learn instructional assessment is to *do it*. (OVERHEAD #2)

As noted in the current *Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing* (1994), the most powerful assessments are those that occur between a teacher and his or her students during the daily activity of the classroom. Practiced in this way, instructional assessment is a powerful tool that can be used effectively with all types of students in all types of settings. The dynamic nature of instructional assessment allows for this type of versatility.

Through collaborative efforts, teachers have a much better opportunity to work successfully in meeting the learning needs of students who are at risk of academic failure. They are able to bring different perspectives to bear on each problem, which promotes dialogue, inquiry, and added reflection. Their collaboration efforts encourage the ongoing collection of data and lead to meaningful instructional decisions based upon how the student responds over time as shown by the data. This type of dynamic process is not available through one-shot testing, nor are the insights which lead to meaningful changes in the student's instructional program.

To learn and apply instructional assessment is to do it - to do it over and over again. The dynamics of instructional assessment change as students grow in their learning and as instructional demands vary from task to task. Trainers may need specific modeling and guided practice before attempting to use the process independently. By practicing and applying instructional assessment, trainers and teachers become comfortable with the process and gain new intervention strategies which complement the process. It is important to remember that instructional assessment is a *process* which evolves and develops as it is practiced over time.

Legal Basis for Instructional Assessment

Two sections of Public Law 94-142/Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) bear repeating. The first (Regulation 30.550) states that:

> Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that **education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.** (OVERHEAD #3)

The second (Regulations 300.541 and 300.543) states that:

> A team may determine a child has a specific learning disability if the child does not achieve commensurate with his or her age and ability levels... **when provided with learning experiences appropriate for the child's age and ability levels...which is not correctable without special education and related services.** (OVERHEAD #4)

When viewed collectively these two statements clearly indicate that: 1) special education is not a place, it is a service which needs to occur predominately in the regular classroom; and 2) the appropriateness of the student's learning experiences must be assessed and interventions undertaken within the regular classroom before any determination can be made considering learning disability eligibility and, by inference, special education eligibility.

Proper attention to appropriate learning experiences and correctable performance problems prior to special education placement are portions of the law that have been largely ignored. These provisions in the law indicate, however, that there should be genuine and systematic attempts to intervene with the student over a sufficient time period in a regular classroom program prior to any formal psycho-educational assessment for the purpose of determining special education eligibility. To avoid misidentification, special education services should be considered only when appropriate interventions have been attempted and found to be unsuccessful within the scope of the regular classroom instructional program (Kovaleski, Lowery & Gickling, 1995).

Just as careful attention should be given to the quality of the learning experiences students receive in the regular classroom prior to any eligibility decision, similar attention must be given to students who meet the eligibility criteria for special programs. In fact, it is now known that the real challenges of the 1990s and beyond are no longer about eligibility and access. They are about the *quality* of the learning experiences special education (and compensatory education) students receive and about how well their school experiences prepare them to function in life (Weiner, 1990).

Pennsylvania's Response

To conform more fully to the intent of the I.D.E.A., Pennsylvania in 1990 instituted Special Education Regulations and Standards to provide a systematic assessment and intervention period prior to special education determination. The emphasis of this process was clearly on intervention. Roger Feir, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education, noted that the "focus is on the instructional needs of students, rather than on perceived internal deficiencies of student" (1992).

Section 342.24 (f) of the Pennsylvania Special Education Standards states:

> The screening and evaluation process shall be the **systematic determination of the degree to which a student needs instructional support and special education services and programs.** (OVERHEAD #5)

This portion of the law delineates the need for a screening and evaluation process which can be systematically applied and provides relevant data to determine the degree of need for instructional support and/or special education services. The degree of need is described as:

> The **student's measured instructional level** compared to the functional ability of the regular education program to maintain that level in the student's regular class. (OVERHEAD #6)

Critical to these Standards is the systematic determination of need. This systematic process can only be achieved by providing for a sufficient intervention period and by analyzing the student's progress during the intervention period. An essential element of this process is "a longitudinal analysis of the student's response to intervention as the primary indicator of the student's need for further services" (Kovaleski, Tucker & Duffy, 1995, p. 1).

These Standards indicate the instructional evaluation does not consist of a static testing situation but is based on an ongoing analysis of the student's response to effective instruction within the regular classroom curriculum. The 1994 *Standards for the Assessment of Reading and*

Writing reinforce this point, noting that "placement in, or eligibility for, specialized programs has a profound influence on a student's life and learning. Such decisions are simply too important to make on the basis of a single measure, evaluation tool, or perspective" (p. 29).

The intervention period and the analysis of the student's progress is designed to be performed in the context of the instructional support team process, with the goal of assuring that the student is taught on his or her instructional level. This conforms to Section 342.25 (j) of the state's Special Education Standards which says that an instructional evaluation of students in academic programs who are suspected of needing special education services:

> shall include an instructional evaluation consisting of an assessment of the basic academic content that the student is expected to learn. (OVERHEAD #7)

While this section of the Standards addresses the need for academic assessment of students suspected of being exceptional and in need of special education services, the standard equally applies to assessment of the social/emotional, behavioral, developmental, and communication skills which contribute to students' adjustment and academic performance in school (Kovaleski, Lowery & Gickling, 1995).

If the student's rate of progress is sufficiently maintained in the regular classroom through instructional support so that the student's rates of acquiring, retaining, and applying skills and information meet the goals of the intervention team, the student is not in need of special education - the student does not display the need for special education services to achieve success (Kovaleski, Lowery & Gickling, 1995). On the other hand, if the student's response to the intervention is labored and erratic, the instructional evaluation requirement of these Regulations may provide confirming evidence as part of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (MDE) that special education services are warranted. In this context, the term "instructional *evaluation*" represents a summative MDE activity which reviews the data gathered through instructional assessment and informs decisions about special education eligibility, placement, and program development. The term "instructional *assessment*" represents a formative data-gathering process that guides decisions about learning, curriculum, and instruction (Kovaleski, Lowery & Gickling, 1995) and occurs during the IST process.

This systematic ongoing approach to assessment also reflects the current direction taken by Title 22, Pennsylvania Code, Chapter 5, Curriculum, which calls for: (OVERHEAD #8)

- authentic systems of assessment,
- attention to student variability,
- high levels of achievement, and
- improvement in curriculum and instructional practices.

Pennsylvania is clearly leading the way for comprehensive and broad-based application of assessment practices that inform the design of instruction, enrich the delivery of instruction, and ultimately enhance learning for ALL students.

All Students Can Learn

Learning is not confined to ability: opportunity, effort, persistence, motivation, emotion, and the quality of curriculum and instruction all contribute to what students learn and how well they learn. Moreover, there are enormous differences in the rates at which students develop and learn. These differences can be as much as five years in normal development in the early grades (Caine & Caine, 1994). Knowing that these differences exist, and commenting on behalf of the national standards movement, Elizabeth Stage indicated that, "we want everyone to get to the top, but we want them to get there in their own way at different speeds" (Elizabeth Stage, University of California, Co-Director of Science, New Standards, personal communication, June 10, 1996).

If all students are to reach the top, some fundamental changes need to take place in our thinking. In contemplating these changes, one might do well to reflect upon what Bloom (1976) saw twenty years ago. Observing the interaction between learning and teaching, he concluded that students were not graded on what they learned or earned in their particular classes; instead, they were graded on their lack of prerequisite skills before ever entering their classes. This insight reveals how central the development of prior knowledge is to student success. To reach the top, the initial step requires assessing what students *know* and what they *can do,* and not what they do not know and cannot do.

All students can learn! And they can learn infinitely better when adequate attention is paid to their entry skills, when what they are taught is carefully considered and coordinated, and when the pace of instruction is adjusted to match their learning rates. (OVERHEAD #9)

The J-Curve

Rosenfield and Gravois (1996) reaffirmed that the most basic belief about assessment, instruction, or education should focus on facilitating the learning of all students and not on documenting learning failure. Concurrent with this belief is the acknowledgement that failure is unacceptable and that teachers' perceptions must move beyond the limits imposed by the normal curve. (Information on the pitfalls of the normal curve concept are presented in the next section.) What one must realize, in fact, is that the performance of students conforms to the normal curve *without* the benefits of appropriate instruction. *With* the benefits of systematic and appropriate instruction, dramatic change is seen in the shape of the curve. It resembles what Lezotte (1990) described as a "J-Curve" where more and more students obtain higher levels of success as a direct result of well-matched and managed instruction. (See Figure on OVERHEADS #10-A & #10-B). Accompanying this shift are fewer and fewer poor grades and a preponderance of high grades which represent learning competence.

A primary mission of the IST process is to create the type of learning and teaching environments which produce the "J-Curve" effect. Learning is accelerated as teachers collaborate to help all students achieve what schools intended them to learn. This does not happen by lowering standards; rather, the "J-Curve" effect is a result of increasing the quality of instruction at the intersection where students' prior knowledge and new learning experiences merge.

To account for the enormous differences in the learning development of children, educators have historically recommended that the rate of curriculum introduction and the pace of instruction for low-achieving students be slowed. This practice failed to address the need to improve the quality of instruction for these students. It also failed to provide evidence that learning actually increased for these students. All it guaranteed was that some children would remain behind other children in school (Allington, 1995).

Rather than perpetuating this faulty notion,

we need to think of individual differences less as indicators of how much or how little

> children might learn, and instead think of them as indicating how much intensive instruction will be needed to accelerate their literacy development and move them alongside their peers. As long as we believe that not all children can learn to read on schedule, we will fail to embrace instructional programs that demonstrate how wrong this tradition is (Allington, 1995, p. 6).

There is sufficient evidence to show that ability grouping, transitional classes, social promotion, and retention practices in general have not been productive. Gains as a result of these programs have been small and disappointing (Walmsley & Allington, 1995; and Allington & McGill-Franzen, 1995). Many now believe that the place to look for answers is in the quality of learning experiences which students receive and the quality of instruction which takes place in the classroom, including the kinds of meaningful support which must take place there. Focusing on particular placements and programs results in disappointment.

The IST concept is based on the belief that achieving the J-Curve effect is possible in Pennsylvania's schools and that schools "must provide all students with the knowledge, skills and strategies that until now have been targeted only to some" (Allington, 1995, p. 1). In order to produce the J-Curve effect, the learning of low-achieving students must be accelerated by providing them more intense instruction, not less! These students need to learn alongside their peers and benefit from the interactions of their peers. They also need to be provided with the types of interventions and strategies that allow them to progress at a catch-up pace. A serious effort to produce the J curve requires maximizing the use of support services in the context of the regular classroom.

The Normal Curve

How children have been educated for the past 80 years in this country has been strongly influenced by the normal curve, a statistical concept which Wiggins (1992) views at odds with the purposes of education. (OVERHEAD #11) His view is understandable, considering that the normal curve has a number of shortcomings, for example: (OVERHEAD #12)

1. It confines the assessment of student learning to infrequent sampling, thus ignoring the active nature of development, learning, and teaching. It also fails to consider the importance of experience and prior knowledge as part of the learning equation.

2. It fosters the development of normative testing which perpetuates inadequate instructional alignment. This, in turn, reinforces the practice of providing a single level of instruction in order to produce a distribution of grades (Hargis, 1989).

3. It exits students at a frustration level.

4. It assumes that a proportion of the school population should fail and that failure for some is inevitable.

In addition, it perpetuates the false notion that either IQ or family circumstances account for more than effort.

> President Clinton recently commented on this false notion saying, "One of the things that I hope you will say in a positive way that you believe all kids can learn, and in a stronger way that you believe that effort is more important than IQ or income - given the right kind of educational opportunities, the right kind of expectations" (Community Update, 1996).

Other limitations could be forwarded, but suffice it to say that the popular acceptance of the normal curve and the overreliance on the use of normative tests has been misguided. While standardized tests areuseful for general comparative purposes, they are totally inadequate for instructional planning. Acknowledging this fact, Smith (1995) lamented that:

> Since 1910 no fewer than 148 standardized reading and achievement tests for elementary students have been published in the United States, and only 34 of them have gone out of print. Presumably, more than a hundred are still in circulation and use, their numbers constantly increasing. Yet no one can demonstrate that any test has ever had a beneficial effect on education (p. 587).

Standardized/normative tests merely reflect the shape of the normal curve; they are totally inadequate for instructional planning. Surber (1996), in fact, has stated that "standardized tests are relatively useless and potentially harmful to children if their use does not emphasize interventions and recommendations for reducing the interference to the child's learning. To date, there is no empirical support for the use of standard batteries in answering specific referral questions or planning appropriate instruction for students" (p. 162). The bottom line is that the acceptance of the normal curve and the overreliance on the use of standardized tests draws attention away from their inadequacies as instruments for facilitating instructional planning, intervening, and accelerating student learning.

Neither learning nor teaching should be bound by normative thinking. As indicated earlier, one could, in fact, expect a normal curve on achievement by merely assessing students' performance without providing them with any intervention (Lezotte, 1990). The goal of education should not be the placement of students along a continuum of haves and have-nots without due consideration to quality instruction. Quite to the contrary, the goal which we are talking about is to develop competent learners! The goal of education is to accelerate the J-Curve.

CHAPTER

2

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT'S ROLE

Rationale

In Chapter 1 the need for changes in the way educational assessment is conceptualized and conducted was introduced. Assessment was presented as a guiding force for improved instructional programs for students. This chapter articulates further the basic purposes of instructional assessment and relates it to other contemporary trends in student assessment.

Most critically, this chapter presents and explains the concept of instructional level or match which should be understood as the central principle on which instructional assessment is based. The gathering of information in order to match and manage instruction at appropriate levels of challenge to assure student success becomes the hallmark of this approach.

New Terminology

Assessment is no longer viewed as a narrow measurement process of aggregating scores for grading purposes or for comparing one student to another across different intellectual and achievement domains. In place of this rather static approach is a return to more natural forms of assessments. This return involves the dynamic and ongoing nature of assessment and how it impacts directly upon the instructional decision-making process of the classroom. As Valencia (1990) so ably noted, assessment chronicles performance and development, sending a message that learning is not complete but is ever changing and evolving. Several new terms have been introduced which reflect this dynamic orientation: (OVERHEAD #13)

Authentic Assessment

Naturalistic Assessment

Portfolio Assessment

Performance-Based Assessment

Curriculum-Based Assessment

These various terms indicate that assessment must reflect authentic performance-based tasks. These tasks are to be performed in natural settings, under natural conditions, using natural materials. The use of portfolios provides a means for selecting representative work samples and for illustrating changes in the quality of each student's work over time. The term "curriculum-based" implies that assessments flow from the curriculum and display the complexities of the curriculum. These terms demonstrate the need for assessment practices to be aligned with instructional practices rather than the other way around (*Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing*, 1994). They also reveal the need to identify what is important for students to learn and to provide them with sufficient opportunities to develop and demonstrate their learning competence.

Understanding the Basic Purpose of Instructional Assessment

While new terminology furthers understanding of the changing direction of assessment and some attributes of these changes, one may still have uncertainties as to precisely what to look for and what to do. Just what is the basic purpose of instructional assessment as implied by these new terms?

The basic purpose of instructional assessment is to clearly identify learning problems and to generate a number of useful perspectives to solve these problems. (*Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing, 1994).* The linchpin guiding this entire process is the type of questions asked. (Chad Activity and OVERHEAD #14)

Fundamentally, instructional assessment is about asking and about getting answers to these five basic questions:

1) What does the student know?

2) What can the student do?

3) How does the student think?

4) How does the student approach what s/he is unsure of?

5) As a teacher, now what do I do?

Without answers to these five questions, the teacher is unlikely to have a clear starting point and, as a result, is unable to work strategically on behalf of the student. When this occurs, efforts to establish an effective instructional match are at best random, haphazard, and off the mark.

New terms such as authentic, performance-based, portfolio, and curriculum-based assessment address significant changes in what is now considered the true genesis of instructional assessment. These broad-based descriptors, though, merely provide general parameters. The heart and soul of these parameters rests with the answers to the five key questions. These questions help to clarify the basic purpose of instructional assessment.

Defining Assessment

Teachers will only be strategic once they clearly know their students. Therefore, the focus of assessment must be on understanding how students learn and on helping them learn, rather than merely evaluating their performance or determining deficits and failures. The focus must also be on the actual context in which learning and teaching occur. As such, assessment cannot be fully understood independent of learning and teaching. (Definition of Assessment Activity and OVERHEAD #15)

From a learning perspective, mature learners self-select, self-monitor, and self-regulate their own learning. Knowing this, Resnick and Klopfer (1989) suggest that: (OVERHEAD #16)

> The goal of all of these instructional activities is to stimulate and nourish students' own mental elaborations of knowledge and to help them grow in their capacity to monitor and guide their own learning and thinking (p. 4).

The culminating goal of learning is to help students become strategic and independent learners. It naturally follows that when teachers know their students, their goal is to guide and facilitate student learning to this end.

Instructional assessment becomes the vehicle for gaining an understanding of student learning and for designing effective instruction. Calfee (1987) supports this notion, seeing assessment as the ability to:

> gather valid evidence to guide decisions about curriculum and instruction, and to evaluate the outcomes of instruction (p. 738). (OVERHEAD #17)

Contrary to many common practices, "the central function of assessment is not to prove whether or not teaching or learning have taken place" (*The Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing*, 1994, p. 15); rather, the principal function for gathering assessment data is to **set the conditions for optimal learning,** thereby improving the quality of learning and teaching. (OVERHEAD #18)

Optimal Learning

Naturally, teachers would like to expect the best from everyone in their classes. More importantly, teachers want to provide students with the conditions that optimize learning and elicit students' best efforts. But what types of conditions are these? If teachers were given the opportunity to observe in different classes, what would they look for? Would they be able to discern effective teaching from ineffective teaching? Would they concentrate on watching the teacher or would they focus their attention on watching what the students were able to do with what the teacher was teaching?

Spady (1984) has given us some indication of the features that need to be present for optimal learning to occur. He has stated that: (OVERHEAD #19)

> Excellence occurs when the instructional system is able to provide the learner with an appropriate level of challenge and a realistic opportunity for success on a frequent and continuous basis.

Establishing an Instructional Level

Instructional assessment's primary purpose is to provide relevant data to guide and manage student learning and to ensure that students are responding optimally to what and how they are being taught (Walker, 1992). To achieve this purpose requires obtaining continuous snapshots of what the student knows and is able to do in response to what is being taught. These data are used to create an appropriate level of challenge which allows the student to function at an instructional level (Gickling and Rosenfield, 1995). Determining and maintaining student performance at an instructional level is a major responsibility of the instructional assessment process.

What is Instructional Level?

Instructional level refers to the creation and maintenance of effective learning conditions. Betts (1946) was the first to use the term in stating that this is where "maximum development may be expected when the learner is challenged but not frustrated" (p. 449). In day-to-day teaching terms, an instructional level is where learning *begins.* It represents an "appropriate fit" or "comfort zone" where the student has the prerequisite skills to enter the classroom curriculum and can benefit maximally from instruction (Rosenfield, 1987).

What Are Its Key Features? (OVERHEAD #20)

- It **provides for an appropriate margin of challenge.** Learning tasks should offer appropriate challenge but not be frustrating.

- It **builds upon prior knowledge.** Providing for an appropriate margin of challenge requires assessing what the student knows.

- It **allows for high rates of learning.** Students exhibit high task persistence, task completion, and comprehension.

- It **represents a fluid and dynamic concept.** Instructional levels change as student performance changes.

- It **insures the systematic measurement of student performance.** Rates of learning cannot be accurately assessed in the absence of an instructional level.

When a student is working at an instructional level, effective learning conditions exist. These conditions are created by manipulating the teaching variables that make up the learning environment. When an "appropriate" fit occurs between instructional, curricular, and student variables, the conditions are right for acquiring and retaining information and for evaluating the results of instruction. If the student is not functioning at an instructional level, the conditions for determining accurate measures of the student's rate of learning will likely be flawed.

What Instructional Level Is Not

Instructional level, as used here, does not refer to administering a norm-referenced test or an informal inventory for the purpose of gaining a grade level score and then matching material to that grade level score. Neither does it mean the placement of a student at a particular grade level or in a particular book. An instructional level is not a static or grade level concept. Instead, it refers only to a "comfort zone" between what is actually being taught and the student's ability to handle what is being taught at a particular time. It represents only a momentary place in time, a place that constantly changes as new material is introduced and taught.

The instructional level is affected by the suitability of the material being taught, the student who is learning from the material, and the teacher who is using the material. All three aspects converge to create this comfort zone or instructional level. (OVERHEAD #21)

What Guidelines are Used?

Various guidelines are used to match the student's entry skills to the difficulty of the material. Percentages of accuracy derived from both the reading and the teacher effectiveness literature are the most common forms. For example, in reading connected discourse, the figure of 93-97 percent known running-words is generally applied. This high percentage of known words is often sufficient to allow context clues to assist the student in unlocking the few remaining unknown words. For direct instruction and practice activities, a known level of

70-85% is generally used, indicating that practice is reserved for learning a limited number of new items in combination with what is already known. (SAMMIT Activity and OVERHEADS #22-A, #22-B, #22-C, #22-D, #22-E). These accuracy percentages, drawn from the teaching of reading, are also applicable to mathematics and other content subjects.

Another guideline to consider when determining an instructional level is the developmental age of the child. Research (Leon, 1970) has indicated that the amount of new information a child can process in addition to the prior knowledge which the child already possesses is developmentally related. The following diagram, for example, indicates that a three-year old can process on the average one new item at a time. A five-year old can process two new items on the average at a time; a seven-year old, three new items on the average at a time, etc.

Developmental Ages	average number of new items
15	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
13	0 0 0 0 0 0 0
11	0 0 0 0 0 0
9	0 0 0 0
7	0 0 0
5	0 0
3	0

The developmental age of a student, combined with an assessment of the student's prior knowledge, provides a useful set of guidelines for determining an appropriate margin of challenge related to what the student already knows and is able to do.

How is Instructional Level Identified and Maintained?

The instructional assessment process is used to identify the student's instructional level. This process systematically analyzes the student's responses to instruction to determine which specific instructional strategies and structures improve student performance. This dynamic process is used to identify and refine instructional strategies that have a high probability of success and to guide instruction as the student learns under daily classroom conditions (Kovaleski, Tucker & Duffy, 1995).

Instructional assessment involves a set of procedures that includes, but is not limited to:

- Direct systematic classroom observations (e.g., academic learning time).
- Student, teacher, and parent interviews.
- Direct authentic assessment of the student in the curriculum. (In reading: running records, timed readings, retellings, question forming, self-monitoring, and self-regulating activity; in math: task analysis, error analysis, math probes, problem solving, and critical thinking.)

Instructional assessment strives to identify and maintain the instructional levels of students through the process of continuous data gathering. This process involves assessing how each student responds to specific intervention strategies and making whatever adjustments are necessary based upon an ongoing analysis of the data.

Creating a positive emotional environment for children also increases the probability that they will perform at high levels, since emotion plays a major role in student learning and development. Situations in which children are embarrassed, humiliated, ridiculed, frustrated, or threatened must be avoided. Under these circumstances, studies of brain chemistry have revealed that a student's ability to learn may decrease or, in some cases, be inhibited (Caine & Caine, 1994). In addition to being sensitive to a child's present needs and developmental level, teachers and child caregivers must understand their own perceptions and responses to learning and behavior problems. They must be vigilant and not participate in any thoughtless acts which precipitate a loss to student learning.

The Mismatch

For most students identified for instructional support, the basic problem is that there is a gap between what the student is able to do and what the learning situation demands. (OVERHEAD #23) The extent of this gap reflects the degree to which the student's responses and behaviors vary from the expectations imposed upon the student by the constant changes in the curricula and by the instruction of that curricula (Gickling & Rosenfield, 1995).

One major reason for the mismatch is that educators historically have viewed assessment separately from curriculum and instruction. They understand some general relationships but hold the perspective that assessment's primary role is to determine whether students have learned what they have been taught. To reinforce this point, Skrtic (1991) noted that classroom teachers rarely view their instructional practices as contributing to irregularities in student performance or as a potential source of a student's learning difficulties. The student, rather than the prevailing program, is seen as the source of the problem. Furthermore, there is evidence to show that even when classroom teachers acknowledge that their curriculum materials and accompanying instruction are too hard for certain students, they tend to teach it anyway (Bennett, et. al., 1984). This type of thinking contributes to not using ongoing student assessment data to form meaningful decisions about curriculum and instruction. Moreover, it perpetuates the view of deficient learners rather than ineffective settings.

Rather than viewing the problem as a student deficiency, or worse still, as a defect in the student's ability to learn, it is proposed that the problem be viewed as an inadequate match between the student and the setting (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996). This idea indicates that the problem cannot be adequately identified void of the context in which it occurs.

The assessment data must cover the student's ability to learn as well as the instructional environment where he is expected to learn. Ysseldyke and Christenson (1987) state:

> Since a student's performance is a function of classroom variables, it is necessary to analyze the learning environment in order

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> to design effective interventions. We believe that educators should not categorize or label a student without considering the role instructional factors play in the student's learning difficulties. Both student and characteristic learning environment data should be considered (p. 20).

This in-depth analysis of the classroom setting of the interaction between the student, the student and his or her peers, the curriculum, and the daily instruction, provides for a more thorough appraisal of the learning situation. By examining these interrelated factors, teachers are able to parcel out those variables which adversely effect the student's learning and replace them with interventions that work. In this regard, intervention is not seen as a place to send the student; rather it is viewed as a series of carefully constructed activities developed from classroom-based assessments to support the student's growth and development directly within the regular classroom setting (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996).

The instructional assessment process begins with an accurate appraisal of the classroom setting. When the instructional assessment process takes into account how curriculum, instruction, and peer influences affect the performance of the student, it broadens the focus of assessment and yields more reliable information on which to base sound intervention decisions. This broader focus requires the need to build strong partnerships so that everyone involved with the student is committed to common goals and a common effort.

The breakdown between learning and teaching occurs because of a mismatch between the entry level skills and knowledge of the student and the academic, behavioral, and/or social expectations placed on the student by the learning environment. The reason for gathering assessment data that address both the student's skills and the learning environment is to generate enough relevant information to intervene and to overcome the mismatch. Unless corrective action is taken, added strain is placed upon the learner-teacher interaction which widens the gap even further. The focus of the IST's problem-solving efforts, therefore, involves matching the entry level skills and knowledge of the student with the instructional and management

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strategies used with the student. "The goal is to work collaboratively to explore the entry level characteristics of the child so that instruction is pegged at the child's instructional level" (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, p. 16). The task requires bringing student, curriculum, and instructional variables together at an instructional level to create a working comfort zone for both the student and the teacher. (OVERHEAD #24)

Reviewing Major Points of Instructional Assessment

The return to more natural forms of assessment complements the IST process and has benefited both students and teachers in a number of ways (Gickling & Rosenfield, 1995). Before moving to the next section, a review of the major points covered in this manual concerning instructional assessment is appropriate. (OVERHEAD #25)

Instructional assessment:

- takes into account teacher's expectations. Knowing what the teacher expects the student to start doing or to stop doing is essential if the student is to be successful in the classroom.
- complements prevailing curriculum approaches. Adhering to a set of generic principles enables instructional assessment to be successfully applied to any number of curriculum programs and practices.
- is based in the curriculum. Aligning assessment practices with what is actually taught in the classroom removes the mysteries and surprises from the assessment process.
- drives the instruction in the classroom. Assessing the learning needs of the student is what actually guides the curriculum and instructional decision-making process of the classroom.
- considers all domains/factors which influence a student's learning.
- focuses on what the student knows and is able to do. Building upon the student's prior knowledge as well as how the student thinks about and processes his or her work enables a student to

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maintain an active role in learning.

- strives for high uniform scores among students. Accelerating the learning of all students and achieving learner competence is the primary goal of assessment - it is not about distributing scores along a normal continuum.

- allows for the direct and continuous measurement of progress. Monitoring and documenting student progress over time enables teachers to see both subtle and/or major changes in learning and performance.

CHAPTER

3

PHASES OF THE IST PROCESS

Rationale

Assessment procedures that are systematically and uniformly applied within a school system and across school districts help to safeguard the rights of students and families and assure the equitable delivery of educational services. This chapter explains the procedures of instructional assessment and describes the collaborative structure in which assessment takes place in the IST process.

The Systematic Search for What Works

Phases of the Instructional Assessment Process

The instructional assessment process moves through four phases: (OVERHEAD #26)

- entry
- hypothesis forming
- verification
- outcome

In the entry phase the team reviews and analyzes gathered data. The team determines the interrelatedness of information and what other data are needed. When it is determined what information is missing, the team sets a plan of action for acquiring these data by deciding how and by whom the data will be gathered. Collaborative sharing of information among team members insures that accountability is built into the data-gathering process.

The second phase is called the hypothesis-forming phase. As the team gathers data, it is a natural progression to begin to narrow the problem and hypothesize how to solve it. Reflective questions, based on data analysis, help the team refine the hypothesis about the student and guide them to establish measurable statements of the problem and goal(s). An intervention plan is then designed around successful strategies that emerged from the initial assessment process.

The third phase is called the verifying phase. In the verifying phase the team assures that the intervention is implemented as planned, and assesses the student's response to the intervention (acquisition and retention). Through collaboration in the verifying phase, the team makes adjustments to the intervention plan as soon as the need arises. This monitoring and adjusting of the plan avoids spending time on ineffective interventions and verifies those strategies that are most effective.

The final phase is the outcome phase. At the end of the verifying phase, a decision is made concerning the success of the intervention plan and the progress made by the student. The team determines the next step in the student's educational plan. Collaborative teaming assures that the activities of these two phases, verifying and outcome, are conducted and that the reflective-questioning procedure continues during these important phases. At this time the team is looking for indicators about whether the student can be maintained at instructional level in a traditional educational setting and/or sequence, or whether specially designed instruction may be appropriate.

Although the instructional assessment process can be conceptualized as individual phases, in practice it is better understood as overlapping and recursive procedures that are used to systematically guide the decision-making process. These assessment procedures yield comprehensive data which address the student's success in meeting the academic and behavioral demands of the classroom. To provide for this thorough and accurate instructional assessment, a structure is suggested to assist the team in conducting the systematic analysis of the presenting problem and the continuous reviewing of the assessment-intervention process. Within the instructional support process, this structure is called checkpoints.

The Checkpoint Structure

Creating the Assessment Structure and Analysis Format

The checkpoint structure insures that a collaborative team effort forms the foundation of the assessment and guides the team throughout the problem-solving process. Assessment data are typically gathered by several team members from a variety of sources. These data are subsequently shared and analyzed among team members. Checkpoints are these naturally occurring points in time when certain assessment activities have been completed and need to be reviewed by the team. This mutual and reciprocal process provides support for team members and assurance that multiple perspectives have contributed to the assessment.

Checkpoints provide a self-reflective structure in which the team considers alternative bases for the behavior/performance problem(s), sets competing hypotheses, and tests them through analysis of the student's response to interventions. In addition to a direct assessment of the student's performance, this structure assures that the team analyzes features of the instructional environment. (A description of instructional environment variables, as well as a suggested framework for organizing and analyzing them, is included as part of a case study example of the checkpoint structure in Appendix II of this manual.)

The IST designates checkpoints at various stages of the instructional assessment process. At each checkpoint during the *initial* data gathering, the team engages in the following eight steps: (OVERHEAD #27)

1. Review the existing data.

2. Organize the existing data according to instructional variables. Look for a balance of data among the instructional variables to ensure that all areas have been investigated.

3. Identify relevant and irrelevant data. Analyze the data and formulate reflective questions to determine additional areas of investigation.

4. Decide what data may be related and how they may be affecting one other. Determine which of

the interrelationships are important to focus on for the student.

5. Decide what data are needed to answer the reflective questions of inquiry and to increase the accuracy of the identification of the problem.

6. Decide how the missing data will be collected and documented.

7. Decide who will collect the missing data.

8. Set the next checkpoint.

The problem-analysis checkpoint structure is followed for the entire instructional assessment process. It is important to recognize the function of the checkpoint procedure as being critical to the continuous analysis of the data across instructional variables, regardless of where the team is in terms of the instructional assessment process. Teams move through this process systematically to clearly identify problems based on gathered data. These data also guide the team to formulate an observable and measurable goal(s). They then construct and implement a plan to find the best instructional match for the student. This process is used to systematically search for what works.

Entry Phase

When beginning the systematic search for what works for any student, the team thoughtfully considers the information that is already available and determines what additional information or data are needed to clarify the problem. There are always questions that need to be answered. As previously discussed in Chapter 2 and in the checkpoint structure, these questions are what guide the search. The team refers to these guiding questions as a basis for inquiry.

As the team works toward answering their questions, critical factors emerge about the existing conditions of learning. The missing data start to drive the direction of the data-gathering activities which are characterized by four critical features: (OVERHEAD #28)

- Determination of the student's **performance** level
- Analysis of the **instructional environment**
- Analysis of **qualitative** and **quantitative data***
- Establishment of **baseline data**

These features interweave information gathered from different sources and through a variety of means.

Requesting Assistance

The identification of a student needing some level of instructional support is typically done by the classroom teacher or parents or through Level I or II screening, as explained in the PDE IST Guidelines. The completion of a request for assistance or concern form usually signals the initiation of the IST assessment process and the beginning of the entry phase. However, the quality and utility of the assessment information generated from the request for assistance is predetermined by its format, the specific questions that are asked, and the teachers' understanding of how to answer the questions. Effective teams thoughtfully construct the request for assistance or concern procedure and thoroughly train requesting teachers in its use. Over time and with practice, a teacher will respond to these questions by giving specific observable and measurable information that conveys his or her perception of the problem. This kind of information generally reduces the time needed to clarify the problem and expedites the creation of an instructional match for the student. (OVERHEADS #29-A, B & C)

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*To avoid confusion in terminology, assessors "distinguish between the two by defining qualitative data as narrative recordings designed to describe and understand a given situation. In contrast, quantitative data are numerical and are designed to measure the occurrence of specific behaviors" (Heron and Harris, 1987, p. 221).

Problem Clarification

The first action of the team is to clarify the request. The clarification of the presenting concern is essential so that the team does not spend time gathering the wrong information. In addition to clarifying responses to the questions on a request for assistance form, the team constructs initial reflective questions about other factors that may be influencing the problem. These questions reflect consideration of factors related to the curriculum, instruction, and school/home environments, in addition to the student's performance.

Some of these questions might sound like this:

- Does the instruction match the student's developmental level?
- Are there special language or cultural needs to be considered? For further information on assessment for these needs, see "IST for Students who are Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse (IST Document #218)"
- Are there special home supports to be considered, (e.g., outside agencies)?
- Is the student able to respond in an unaided manner without the need for assisted communication?
- Is the inappropriate behavior injurious to self or others? Is there a safety issue?

Problem clarification results in a specific statement of the discrepancy between the student's current level of performance and the teacher's expectations. "The specific information that helps to clarify the discrepancy includes (1) the student's social behaviors and/or academic skills, including entry level skills in these areas; (2) the nature of the tasks being required of the student; and (3) the instructional and/or management strategies used, both effective and ineffective" (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, p. 31).

Interviewing

There are three basic methods of obtaining answers to assessment questions. They are: interviews, observations, and direct assessment of the student in curriculum materials. In a system where time is a valued commodity, interviewing can serve as an assessment tool capable of providing focus and efficiency to the instructional assessment process. Interviewing tends to receive the least amount of attention in regard to assessment. Too often, the usefulness of this assessment method is not realized by instructional support team members and is conducted with limited forethought and planning. Interviewing, as a result, is implemented via checklists and preprinted lists of questions, with little or no consideration given to the purpose of the interview, the types of questions that will be asked, or how questions will be sequenced. Team members who actually conduct the interviews must give thoughtful deliberation to these interview elements. Carefully planned and conducted interviews establish a sound foundation for the remainder of the assessment process.

To facilitate understanding how interviewing, observation, and curriculum-based assessment are used in the IST assessment process, a case example will be used throughout this chapter.

A third grade teacher determines that a particular student James is falling behind the rest of the class. James is having difficulty reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work. The teacher is perplexed by this situation and feels a colleague/team approach could assist her in analyzing the problem and designing a more effective instructional program for James. She accesses the IST through the process instituted at her school. (OVERHEAD #30)

At their first checkpoint, the team in the case of James, reviewed the request for assistance and formulated reflective questions to help clarify the concern. They determined that the support teacher would conduct interviews with the classroom teacher and other teachers, James, and his mother, to answer these questions. They would meet again in one week to review the new information, which would be their second checkpoint.

The function of the teacher interview is to clarify the problem by narrowing the focus of the presenting concern and stating it in precise observable terms. This precision helps to guide the team's assessment activities. A vague concern such as "James is having difficulty in reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work" gives the team too little information. (Example Case Activity and OVERHEADS #31-A, B & C)

For James, questions related to his reading might include:

- Exactly what is meant by "having difficulty" in reading?
- Is the difficulty observed only in reading class or also in math, science, music, etc.?
- What aspect of reading is difficult for James (e.g., decoding of words, comprehension, fluency)?
- When is reading taught (a.m. or p.m., before or after lunch or recess)?
- What kinds of materials are used to teach reading (e.g., basal series, trade books)?
- Does the student show interest in the topic being read?
- How long has he been having difficulty?
- Are other students also having difficulty?
- Is reading class structured in small groups or large ones?

In terms of James's reluctance to respond, questions might include:

- Does James ever respond in any format such as oral, written, drawings, hand gestures, etc.?
- Is the unresponsiveness only in reading class or in other activities as well?
- Do other students respond appropriately and in the time expected?
- Has James *ever* been observed to respond appropriately?
- How much time is allowed for a response to be made?
- Is James normally quiet, shy, or withdrawn?

In terms of James's attention, questions might include:

- Does James ever make and maintain eye contact?
- Does he appear to be listening?

- Is this attention problem only in reading class or others as well?
- Does he display attention to task at any other times during the day (in art, music, physical education class, etc.)?
- Does James distract himself or others when he seems to not be paying attention?
- What is James doing when he is not attending (e.g., leave his seat, bothering others)?

Parents are considered team members and are asked, by way of an interview, to share information that the team will find helpful in searching for proper strategies for their child. One function of the parent interview is to begin to build a positive working relationship with them. Equally important is the information that the parents provide related to their perception of their child's performance.

In James's case, the parents were advised that their child's teacher had requested the team's assistance in finding strategies to use in the classroom and they were encouraged to participate in the team process. The support teacher conducted this interview structuring it around questions such as

- Are the parents aware that James is having difficulties with class work?
- Do they see the same types of behavior at home (e.g., low interest in reading, difficulty attending)?
- Are the parents willing to act as partners in this process and are they willing to assist at home with strategies?
- Are there any extenuating circumstances at home that might be contributing to the problems at school?
- Is there anything else the parents feel the team needs to know that may have relevance to James's problems?

The function of the student interview is to gather information with regard to the student's perception of himself and his involvement in school. The team must be prudent in eliciting this information so as not to breach issues of family confidentiality.

The support teacher also conducted the interview with James. It was structured around questions such as

- What is your impression of school?
- How do you think you are doing in reading (or math, science, etc.)?
- What do you think the problem is?
- What might be causing the problem?
- What do you think you could do to improve?
- How do you get along with other students?

At this point in James's case, the support teacher summarized the interview information and communicated it to the classroom teacher, the guidance counselor, and the Title I teacher. This second checkpoint allowed the team to review the information gathered from the interviews and to further reflect on the problem.

Summary of Interviews

As a result of the classroom teacher interview, the "difficulty" in reading was clarified: James cannot consistently identify the four elements of a story even though the rest of the class demonstrates this skill. Reading instruction immediately follows the morning recess and is just prior to the lunch break.

Other teachers who have James in their class did not report similar problems and concerns. In regard to James's unresponsiveness, the team learned that James answers questions in other subject areas but seems not to want to participate in the reading discussions. He maintains eye contact and seems to be listening, but never answers a question, even with prodding. Regarding James's attention to task, he is reportedly more attentive during math and other subjects than during reading. When he is off-task, he doesn't cause disruptions and isn't a discipline problem.

The telephone interview with James's mother indicated that this is the second school James has attended. As a family, they don't have much time to read, although James enjoys looking at books at home. James is sometimes self-conscious and has few friends at the new school; however, his mother feels that this will be short-lived as he has always been able to make friends in the past. James is very athletic; he has signed up for soccer and is looking forward to having teammates as friends.

James enjoyed his interview with the support teacher. He told her he didn't like answering questions in front of his classmates because he was afraid they would make fun of him if he was wrong. He doesn't have many friends and really wants the others to like him. James likes his teacher. Even though he feels he tries hard, he just can't seem to remember all the parts of a story.

Through written comments on the interview summary sheets and informal contacts and consultations, the team analyzed this information and planned the next step for assessment. It was determined that the presenting problem occurs in the regular classroom during reading class time. The team reflected on their lack of information specifically related to James's responses in whole-group reading class and other classroom contexts. In addition, there were lingering questions about his attention and being "off-task." They decided that the consequent assessment steps would occur during whole-group reading and other instruction which required reading. These would be in the form of systematic observations of James's responses in class as well as direct curriculum-based assessments in reading. The observations would be conducted by the guidance counselor. The support teacher and Title I teacher would share the responsibility for conducting the curriculum-based assessments. The team set the third checkpoint to occur at the completion of these particular assessment steps which they anticipated to be in approximately seven school days.

Systematic Observation

The purpose of the classroom observation is to substantiate the perceived problem and to gather information that leads the team to the next assessment point. Rosenfield and Gravois (1996) emphasize the importance of having an identified purpose to guide the observation process so that it is systematic rather than casual or anecdotal. "Because of the complexity of classroom life, it is critical to develop observational techniques that minimize bias and provide useful information for decision-making. The following are the three key questions to ask: (1) What do I want to know? (2) How does my observational system answer my question? and (3) Am I being objective in reporting what I see?" (p. 33). (OVERHEAD #32)

There are many observation formats available to team members. The Academic Learning Time (ALT) format is one which yields information related to a student's academic functioning. ALT is the portion of instructional time allocated to a subject-matter area during which students are engaged actively and successfully in instructional activities. Gickling (1985) operationally defined ALT as (a) time on task, (b) task completion, and (c) task comprehension. A complete description of this version of ALT is included in Appendix III; other formats include Saudargas & Creed-Murrah (1981) and Ysseldyke & Christenson (TIES, 1993-1994).

In James's case, the classroom teacher identified two areas of concern about the way James responds in class - she noted that he "won't respond when asked a question and often is not attending to his work." The team decided to use the Academic Learning Time (ALT) procedures and format that measures on-task, task completion, and task comprehension behaviors to observe him in reading class. They wanted to observe these behaviors to determine how they might be related to his reading difficulty. By engaging in systematic observations using the ALT procedure, the guidance counselor gathered relevant data which specifically addressed these concerns.

These observations indicated that James was on task during reading class at a rate comparable to his peers. The data also showed that he had been given the same number of opportunities to respond as the rest of the class, and the time allowed for responding was adequate; however, James never raised his hand to indicate his having an answer. Even when the teacher prompted him to answer, James gave no oral response.

In written work James completed tasks in the time allotted, but his answers were correct only 45% of the time. It was observed that he seemed to prefer to answer questions when he was given choices and could look back in the text of the story.

If the presenting problem is about a behavioral concern, the student needs to be observed in various settings in the school experience (e.g., the bus, playground, cafeteria, regular classroom, or special subject classes such as art, music, and physical education). The instructional assessment process requires that measurable information be gathered, such as: the frequency of the behavior (the number of occurrences of the behavior), the percent of correct responses in relationship to the total responses, the duration of the behavior (total amount of time engaged in the behavior), the time between a command and the child's response to the command, and the intensity of the behavior (degree or magnitude of the behavior).

These observations should also record and analyze:

- peer-student and teacher-student specific behavior interactions and communication patterns;
- where, when, and with whom the behaviors occur; and
- what triggers and/or sustains the undesirable behavior, and what appears to cause it to diminish or stop.

For more information on specific techniques for approaching behavior and discipline concerns see Chapter 4 of this manual and the Guidelines for Effective Behavioral Support published by PDE in 1995.

Curriculum-based Assessment Techniques

When determining the student's performance level, the assessment needs to be based on the curricular demands in the classroom. The terms naturalistic and dynamic are used to describe the process of curriculum-based assessment (CBA). "The most natural medium to use for instructional assessment is the day-to-day curriculum being taught in the classroom. The naturalness of the curriculum as the medium of assessment, along with a recognition of the importance of aligning assessment practices with instructional practices to favorably affect both learning and teaching, are the primary reasons for the development of curriculum-based assessment" (Gickling and Rosenfield, 1995, p. 588). In addition, these authors distinguish CBA as an assessment approach that:

- complements prevailing curriculum approaches;
- aligns assessment practices with what is actually being taught in the classroom;
- starts with what the student knows in building an integrated program;

- addresses the need to regulate task variability, task demand, and the pace of instruction to ensure student success;
- strives for high uniform performance among students; and
- allows for the direct and continuous assessment of student progress.

As Rosenfield and Gravois (1996) have noted, the assessment process does not begin with a hunt for solutions, it begins with identifying the problem and the factors affecting the problem in classroom-based terms. The problem cannot be adequately identified void of the context in which the problem occurs. The focus of problem identification must include the classroom setting as well as the student. This is the dynamic nature of instructional assessment where information from various aspects of the instructional environment come together to aid in identifying the problem.

The purpose of curriculum-based assessment is to bring into sharper focus the mismatch between the student's performance level and the task demands. By employing CBA strategies over time, educators gather data which point to effective teaching strategies that can be developed into viable intervention plans. More detailed information on CBA is included in Appendix I of this manual, as well as in Guiding Reading Instruction Using CBA (IST Document #203) and IST Module: Guiding Mathematics Instruction Through CBA (IST Document #202).

Basic to the curriculum-based assessment process is the search for what the student already knows and the identification of the prior knowledge the student is bringing to the learning situation. The assessor should not limit the search by looking for what the student does *not* know. For learning to take place there needs to be a conceptual or cognitive basis for integrating new information. Therefore, the ratio of known material (what the student already knows) to unknown material (what the student needs to learn) should be kept at the 7:3 level during direct instruction (as discussed in Chapter 2). It is important that the assessor *always* builds in success in this way during assessment.

Conducting CBA is not a one-shot activity. A series of brief (approximately ten to fifteen minutes) curriculum-based assessment sessions should be conducted. These sessions take place in the classroom setting at times that are mutually comfortable for the classroom teacher and the person conducting the assessment. The nature of the assessment is determined by the information gathered from the interview with the classroom teacher and takes into consideration:

- the scope and sequence of the curricular content;
- the materials used in the classroom; and
- the classroom teacher's expectations.

The assessor uses this information to formulate an assessment designed specifically for the target student.

In the CBA sessions, procedures are employed to gather data to determine the student's performance level and how adjustments to the learning environment could enhance the student's performance. The dynamic characteristic of this assessment allows for a continuous modification to the instructional program to search for what works for this student. As Kovaleski, Tucker, and Duffy (1995) state, instructional assessment is the process that systematically analyzes a student's response to instruction to determine what specific instructional strategies and structures improve performance.

Gickling and Rosenfield (1995) note that curriculum-based assessment follows four steps: (OVERHEAD #33)

- selecting
- assessing
- matching
- teaching

In the selecting step, "the process begins with trying to gain some sense of the student's entry skills and to use the information to begin constructing...activities on the student's instructional level" (Gickling & Rosenfield, 1995, p. 591). Through this process the assessor determines the student's prior knowledge, skill levels, strengths, and approaches to the task. The selection of appropriate materials begins at this point and is refined later.

In the assessing step, the student *interacts* with the text or material. If the problem area is reading, the student reads a segment of text from the curricular materials being used in the classroom. If the problem area is math, sample problems will be attempted from the actual curricular material being used in the classroom. This naturalistic approach enables the assessor to see how the student performs using the curricular materials rather than standardized norm-referenced tests. "Unlike normative assessment practices which push students to the point of frustration during assessment sessions, the CBA process helps students to function comfortably. Conscientious efforts are made to activate the student's prior knowledge without creating frustrating experiences" (Gickling & Rosenfield, 1995, p. 591).

In the matching step, the match between the learner and the material needed to be learned is constructed. Three decisions need to be made at this point in the assessment process in order to design effective instruction:

- Keeping in mind what is known about the student's prior knowledge and entry level skills, how can materials be modified or created to allow the student to work at an instructional level?
- What strategies can be employed to teach the student at an instructional level?
- Based on the results from the student's initial interaction with the material used in the assessment session, what types of support are needed to make this student successful?

In the teaching step, the information gathered in the first three steps is put to use. The teaching process begins by using the identified strategies within the selected material. The teaching is done in accordance with information regarding the student's learning rate, prior knowledge, and strengths, so that the student will function comfortably and the assessor will have a valid indication of how the student performs when success is ensured. Continuous monitoring during this step insures that an instructional match has occurred and learning is being accomplished.

Curriculum-based assessment yields specific information in terms of what the student can do, under what circumstances, and in what settings. By assessing across settings and over time, a clear picture emerges. Together with information gathered from the interviews and observations, the curriculum-based assessment data begin to narrow the problem and suggest probable interventions.

Throughout this assessment process, checkpoints help the team to analyze the emerging picture of the problem. At each checkpoint, existing information is reviewed and new information is added. The team members analyze this information in context and determine the direction and procedures for further assessment. Through this collaborative process, each member is kept up-to-date and is able to have input into the development of a precise description of the problem.

For James, it required five curriculum-based assessment sessions conducted by both the Title I teacher and the support teacher to specifically identify the parameters of his reading problem and to begin to generate workable strategies to ameliorate it. They did this in consultation with each other and the classroom teacher. This CBA information indicated that he was able to decode words and derive meaning from them, using the classroom anthology reading text. For passage comprehension in whole-class instruction, though, he was not willing to take the risk of responding.

As part of their assessment, the Title I teacher and support teacher used a reading-retelling profile checklist to systematically measure James's level of story comprehension and to determine specifically where any breakdown was occurring. These assessments indicated that James could not describe the kind of information required to relate his understanding of the four story elements: setting, characters, problem, and events. In a one-to-one setting he was more willing to respond. In this setting, his initial average accuracy rate on this task was 45%, compared to 80% for the rest of the class. The support teacher and Title I teacher also discovered during these CBA assessments that a strategy for determining story elements, called the story-mapping strategy, appeared to help James to monitor and elaborate his understanding of a story.

For their third checkpoint, the team met briefly to discuss the results of the observations and curriculum-based assessments. The ALT data, combined with the information from previous interviews and the curriculum-based assessments, led them to determine that the on-task and task completion issues did not need further investigation. Task comprehension was still a major concern at this time. Although James was obviously reluctant to respond aloud during whole-group reading class, his classroom teacher noted that he responded orally more often in a smaller group arrangement; this was also confirmed by the Title I teacher. Based on data gathered to this point, the team decided to focus on comprehension of story elements during the intervention period; these comprehension data form the baseline information needed to progress into the next phases of IST. (OVERHEAD #34)

Summary of Entry Phase

The entry phase ends when a critical mass of data surrounding the assessment of instructional variables of learning is reached. The concept of critical mass implies that there has been a thorough data-gathering process conducted that allowed the team to move away from making assumptions or hypotheses about the *problem* and into the arena of making a hypothesis about *interventions* that have a high probability of working for the student. This critical mass has identified those aspects of the instructional environment that will need to be adjusted during the verifying phase in order to establish and maintain an instructional match. The data from the entry phase constitute the baseline from which data from the next phase will be compared. This comparison will help to verify the most efficacious methods and approaches for the student.

Hypothesis-Forming Phase

Although formative hypotheses about the problem and its potential solution are generated from the beginning of the instructional assessment process, there comes a point in data gathering and analysis where the problem has been narrowed and the hypothesis about what will work with the student is refined. At this point, the hypothesis-forming phase of instructional assessment begins. During this phase critical information is crystallized in the process of designing an intervention plan that will be implemented in the classroom.

The hypothesis-forming phase is distinguished by an assessment checkpoint which confirms that all essential information has been gathered and systematically analyzed. The checkpoint reflective questions formulated by teams during this phase are not directed toward assessment of the student's performance; rather, they focus on steps that must occur for a quality intervention plan to be developed. The team uses these questions to reflect on and monitor the accuracy, completeness, and quality of their efforts toward this end. (OVERHEAD #35) Synthesis of information and in-depth analysis at this point continues to focus on the conditions and contexts in which the problem occurs, further aiding the team in precisely identifying the problem and generating a measurable goal. It is essential that the examination of the problem situation considers not only relevant student factors but also the curricular and instructional factors and the environmental settings and demands in which the problem occurs.

In the example case, the focus of relevant information was in classroom reading, specifically in identifying story elements. James's response patterns were analyzed in various instructional contexts. The need to investigate the possibility of an attention problem was considered irrelevant as a clear picture of the reading problem emerged. In addition, a strategy that appeared to improve James's reading comprehension was identified.

Rosenfield and Gravois (1996) state that successful data analysis and completion of problem identification occurs when there is:

- a behaviorally defined statement of the problem in terms of a discrepancy between expected and actual student performance;

- a goal directed towards diminishing or eliminating the discrepancy;
- baseline data on the goal behavior; and
- an understanding of the ecology (the antecedent and consequent conditions) surrounding the behavior in the setting in which the behavior occurs. (p. 34)

The assessment team in the example case clarified the initial vague statement of the problem "having difficulty in reading" by ultimately measuring James's accuracy rate in identifying story elements in various contexts. They then compared this to the classroom average. At the third checkpoint, as discussed previously, this information indicated that his baseline average in accurate story retelling was 45%, compared to the class average of 80%. The problem was then framed as a statement in observable and measurable terms: (OVERHEAD #36)

> **Unaided and using the classroom anthology, James retells story elements of setting, character, problem and events with 45% accuracy as measured by oral and written retellings in various grouped settings, as compared to the class average of 80%.**

Framing the problem in specific, observable, and measurable terms helps the team to reach consensus on a clear definition of the problem and to determine an accurate and realistic goal for the student that is also behaviorally stated.

"The data documenting the current discrepancy are considered the benchmark for the plan" [that will be developed] (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, p. 35). As was noted earlier in this chapter, the team investigates and determines the discrepancy between student performance and classroom demands by assessing through teaching in authentic contexts, initiating trial interventions, and creating effective conditions for learning, thereby establishing an instructional level. In the example case, the assessment team tried the story-mapping strategy and analyzed its success in a one-to-one and small-group setting. The story-mapping strategy in a one-to-one setting appeared to enhance the student's competency and comfort level with story retelling.

Goal Setting

The baseline information stated in the form of a framed problem, along with the student's measured response to specific strategies tried during the initial instructional assessment, provide a basis for setting an observable and measurable goal that aims for a realistic amount of progress during the intervention period. This goal is the appropriate projected improvement in the target behavior area based upon data which documents student learning progress as he or she has responded to the individualized assessment.

Criteria of acceptable performance take into consideration the student's present level of performance, initial information on learning rate, and the projected level of support needed to maximize learning and to maintain an instructional match. Consistent with the collaborative intent of the checkpoint and reflective questioning structure of the assessment process, this goal is established jointly by the classroom teacher and other critical team members, including the parent, and is always developed from a thorough analysis and interpretation of the baseline assessment data. (Please refer to the IST Collaboration Manual for further information regarding suggested team-meeting processes.)

Working from the framed statement of the problem above, the goal in the example case was stated as follows: (OVERHEAD #36)

> **James will increase his reading comprehension in classroom materials used for reading instruction by the end of the intervention period, evidenced by uncued responses identifying the story elements (setting, characters, problem/goal, and events) with an average of at least 75% accuracy.**

Intervention Planning

Once the goal has been established, the development of a hypothesis, (now in the form of an intervention plan that describes what will work for the student), typically occurs at a meeting which includes team members and the student, if appropriate. It is crucial that every effort is made to include the parents at this meeting and to encourage their active participation at this point in the process in the same way they have been included from the beginning. (See also the PDE Instructional Support Guidelines about involving parents.)

The team strives to design strategies that it believes will impact the student's priority need that was identified in the problem identification steps and was based on the data gathered during the entry phase. As Rosenfield and Gravois (1996) point out, "Intervention recommendations are considered from an idiographic perspective, given the unique situation of the particular teacher, classroom and school ecology, and the student involved" (p. 35). The individualized nature of the intervention plan dominates the team's work as they generate, evaluate, and reach consensus on the precise strategies to be used in meeting the goal(s). This process will produce an individualized plan that is feasible and acceptable to all concerned.

Careful thought must be given to including reasonable strategies for use in the home as well as in the school setting. Moreover, students may be given strategies to implement themselves. It is extremely important to match the skills and comfort level with the person performing the intervention. The support teacher or other team member(s) should be designated as coach to the regular classroom teacher, student, or parent who will ultimately be responsible for the strategy. In addition, when assessing performance and planning intervention procedures, it is critical to incorporate ways of effectively managing the intervention within the classroom in anticipation of the fading of support services.

After reaching consensus on what strategies will be used during the intervention period, the team generates an intervention plan that has the following bases:

- The student is taught at his/her instructional level for the duration of the intervention period.
- Instructional materials, texts, and classroom tests are adapted, as needed. (ADAPT, 1989)

- All strategies focus on the development of the fluid and strategic use of skills in authentic situations.

Intervention design requires linking assessment data with selected target behaviors and specifying the level and intensity of the parameters of data tracking. Therefore, the plan must be specific enough to answer the following questions:

- What will be done; that is, is there a detailed description of the specific strategy to be implemented?
- When will it be done? How often? With what materials?
- Who will do it?
- How will effectiveness of the plan be monitored; that is, are there data collection methods to evaluate progress during implementation?
- When will progress be monitored; that is, what are the checkpoint times to monitor progress? (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, p. 35).

Answers to these questions should be based upon resources which are available and most effective in the chosen setting. The intervention plan utilizes the continuum of services, with the regular classroom being the first consideration for location of the intervention, as supported by the home, other school-based services, informal community supports and services, or outside agencies. These efforts are coordinated through regularly scheduled checkpoints with the team and out-of-school services for maximum benefit to the student and family.

In the example case, the team agreed on a plan which specified that the support teacher and the Title I teacher would work one-to-one with James in his classroom for twenty minutes, a total of three days a week, immediately before his morning recess, using a story-mapping strategy to teach the four story elements. They would each use a seven-step procedure to teach James to monitor and elaborate his understanding of the story elements while he reads (Walker, B. J., 1992). His mother agreed to use a simplified version of the story-mapping strategy and the same visual story map, using books he enjoys at home and reading materials supplied by his classroom teacher, Sunday through Thursday evenings. The Title I teacher offered to instruct the mother in the use of the story map. (OVERHEAD #37)

As part of the story-mapping strategy, both the Title I teacher and support teacher would initially use a reading-retelling profile checklist to evaluate James's responses to the teacher-prepared questions that guide the completion of the story map. (OVERHEAD #38) The plan specified that they would meet with the classroom teacher for fifteen minutes before school every Friday to compare these results. The support teacher would monitor the mother's involvement by calling her on Thursday evenings.

A written plan that clearly specifies expectations, designates responsibilities, and is agreed upon by all concerned parties, builds in assurance that the plan will be carried out as designed and creates a framework for making adjustments, if needed. Intervention planning "is complete when an intervention plan has been worked out in detail and is considered realistic and reasonable by those who must actually conduct the implementation" (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, pp. 34-35).

Verifying Phase

This phase is characterized by the systematic implementation of the student's intervention plan within the classroom. "It is not until an intervention is implemented that its feasibility and effectiveness are really tested [or verified]" (Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996, p. 36). The implementation of the intervention plan requires systematic use of instructional level materials, appropriate strategies, classroom modifications and adaptations, progress monitoring, and adjusting intervention strategies.

The team pursues the following tasks during this phase:

- Provides support for the intervention by assisting the classroom teacher to implement the strategy as planned.
- Gathers and analyzes data on a regular basis to determine the ongoing success of the intervention and the possible need to adjust the intervention.
- Considers all avenues to make the intervention a routine, manageable, and authentic part of classroom instruction.
- Maintains communication between the classroom teacher, support services, and parents to enhance the coordination and success of the intervention plan.

The support teacher or team member(s) works with the classroom teacher to establish the intervention as directed by the student's action plan. This series of events is a highly collaborative process in which strategies are attempted, adjusted, and modeled with the classroom teacher.

As the intervention plan is implemented, all strategies for academic problems focus on the development of skills as well as on the fluid and strategic use of these skills in authentic situations. Behavioral interventions focus on the elimination of inappropriate behavior through positive approaches and the building of coping skills.

Fundamental Questions

The purpose of the instructional assessment is to address two fundamental questions. First:

> "Is an instructional level being provided in the regular education program so that the student feels comfortable and competent about his or her performance?"

The team began to address this question during the entry and hypothesis phases and their efforts culminated in an intervention plan that has the potential of delivering instruction at an instructional level for the student. By maintaining an instructional match within the context of the intervention plan, the student is instructed at his or her instructional level. The student is taught at the instructional level for the duration of the intervention period.

During the verifying phase, as the team implements the intervention plan, gathers data, and makes adjustments to the plan, the team will be in a position to answer the second fundamental question:

> "Is the student's learning rate sufficient to be maintained in a regular classroom?"

The concept of rate of learning is based on the common observation that students learn skills at different speeds and with different levels of support needed for the acquisition and retention of new material. To determine if the student may need to be considered for special education, this rate of learning is calculated in addition to the assessment of instructional level.

Rates of Acquisition and Retention*

To address the rate of learning, the concepts of rate of retention, rate of acquisition, and degree of need were developed. Through monitoring at checkpoints established by the intervention plan, the student's progress is analyzed according to his or her ability to acquire and retain the learned material. The rate of acquisition is defined as the relative ease with which a student learns new information or acquires appropriate skills. The rate of retention is defined as the ability of the student to retain and use information or skills in meaningful ways.

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*Rates of acquisition and retention are cited in the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations and Standards as part of the instructional evaluation during the MDE. While reference to these rates of learning do not appear in the provisions for IST in the Regulations and Standards, ISTs have found these concepts to be useful in guiding instruction, assessing students progress, and deciding on the need for further evaluation.

It should be noted that the rates of acquisition and retention represent data-based instructional concepts rather than norm-referenced concepts. There are times when it is appropriate to measure these rates quantitatively and other times when rate is best expressed qualitatively. In either case, instructional support and multidisciplinary evaluation teams will need to base their decisions on data that are derived directly from the instructional process.

Five broad performance expectations are useful to consider when developing the concept of rate of acquisition. These expectations reflect the fact that it is important for students to acquire items, to become fluent/efficient, to learn concepts, to apply strategies, and to gain useful habits. For example, students are required to learn items such as letters, facts, letter sounds, and to develop a working vocabulary. They should become efficient or fluent in the use of items and skills. They need to grasp concepts such as place value, regrouping, and word meanings. In addition, they must learn strategies for interacting with and monitoring their work. Students need to stop inappropriate behavior and engage in appropriate behavior; they need to comply with classroom rules, follow directions, and monitor their own behavior. Finally, students must gain habits that will help them achieve success such as social and organizational skills.

With regard to retention, students are expected to recall what they have learned and to apply what they have learned in appropriate contexts. The educational program should provide students with sufficient guided and independent practice so that they can generalize these skills by transferring them from one situation to another in appropriate ways. Independent and guided practice are also provided to ensure the generalization and transfer of acquired appropriate behaviors from one setting to another.

The instructional support team process works to provide precise assessments that can guide effective instruction during the instructional support period. The goal of instructional support is to assure that students are taught at their instructional level throughout the intervention period. The student's reaction to this instruction can be assessed according to the rates of acquisition and retention. These data are used to analyze the extent to which the regular classroom environment can be modified and adapted via manipulation of instructional variables to maintain student progress.

Graphing Data

Monitoring student progress during the verifying phase is best accomplished through the use of a graph(s). Data gathered during this phase are plotted on a graph that, in turn, demonstrates the amount of progress that is being made toward the goal established by the team. An aim line that connects the baseline data gathered prior to the implementation of strategies with expected outcome data on the last day of the projected intervention period may be added to the graph. This line serves as a reference point for team members when analyzing data and determining the amount of progress toward the anticipated outcome. The results of several strategies across time can be annotated with vertical lines that correspond to the date of adaptation or change. Through the use of a graph the team members can quickly review the impact that one or more strategies are having on moving the student toward the anticipated outcome. One way of doing this is by comparing the plotted points on the graph to the aim line. Based on this comparison, the team determines what adjustments need to be made. Subsequent plotted data points enable the team to determine whether adaptations to or changes in strategies are sufficient to help the student attain the established outcome/goal. (OVERHEAD #39) For further descriptions of graphing techniques, see Shinn (1989).

As part of the monitoring process, consideration must be given to the degree to which the strategy is being implemented. Effects of the strategy cannot be measured if it is not implemented as designed. By working together, the support teacher (and /or other designated team members) and the classroom teacher assure that the strategy is implemented as planned or fine-tuned through systematic adjustments, based on the student's observed response.

Questioning at Implementation Checkpoints

The checkpoint structure continues during the verifying phase. The function of the checkpoints during this phase is to assure that the intervention activities are conducted and to continue to facilitate reflective questions. In the verifying phase, it is important to monitor the integrity of the implementation of the intervention plan and the collection of the acquisition and retention data. Checkpoints in the verifying phase allow the team to make adjustments to the action plan as soon as the need arises, as indicated by the student's lack of progress.

Verification Checkpoint

Typical reflective questions used at this checkpoint include:

- Is instruction being delivered at the student's instructional level?
- Is the intervention plan being implemented as designed?
- What aspects of the instructional environment must be managed to maintain the student's progress toward the goal?
- Do the graphed data indicate that this intervention should be altered or adapted to better meet this student's needs?
- What progress is the student making toward the goal?
- Do the data being collected indicate that this strategy is working for the student?
- What information has been gathered about how this effective instructional strategy can be implemented in the routine of the classroom?

In the example case of James, some reflective questions that might be considered during verification are:

- Should the intensity, in regard to the number of times the strategy is taught during the week, be increased?

- What alternative strategies or modifications could increase the student's use of the story map in a whole-group setting?

- Should nonverbal cues given by the classroom teacher be faded?

- Is James ready to identify story elements without the cues provided by the story map?

- Would an earlier or later time in the day be a more appropriate time for the intervention?

As a result of this kind of questioning and subsequent adjustment of the intervention plan, an instructional match can be maintained and information generated that will enable the team to determine whether the student's learning rate can be maintained in the regular classroom, using the continuum of services available to the student in his or her school.

Fading the Efforts of the Support Teacher and/or Other Team Member(s)

A critical event in the implementation of the intervention plan is the fading of the support teacher's or team member(s') efforts in favor of the classroom teacher. This transition of responsibility is of extreme importance in enabling the classroom teacher to continue support to the student beyond the intervention period. It is critical that a successful instructional strategy, rather than the individual(s) who devised the intervention (i.e., support teacher, team members), is viewed as the agent of change. If this perception is not established at the beginning, it is likely that student performance will deteriorate as the direct involvement of the support teacher or team member is faded out.

The following multi-step continuum illustrates this transition from support teacher or other educator to classroom teacher. To aid this illustration, the example case will be used. Each week of the example is aligned with the appropriate step of the continuum. (OVERHEAD #40)

To this point, it can be recalled that James is in third grade and is having difficulty with comprehension in the classroom literature anthology. He was able to identify story elements during initial assessment with only a 45% average accuracy during initial assessment. Based on this assessment information, the team designed an intervention plan which focused on teaching James to use a story-mapping strategy while he reads to elaborate his understanding of story elements of setting, characters, problem, and events and ultimately improve his independent reading comprehension.

Step I of Transition:

The support teacher or team member(s) begins implementation of the strategy using a one-to-one approach with James.

Week 1

Action: The support teacher and the Title I teacher begin implementation of the strategy using a one-to-one approach with James. The Title I teacher instructs the mother in use of the story map. (OVERHEAD #41)

Monitoring results: At the end of the week the support teacher, the Title I teacher, and the classroom teacher meet to review plan implementation and progress toward the goal, using a graph that identifies baseline and data gathered during week one of the intervention. The Title I teacher and support teacher report that James is very dependent upon their assistance in using the story map during their one-to-one sessions with him. The data demonstrate only a 5% accuracy increase from the beginning baseline in identifying one (characters) out of the four story elements. James identifies all four elements with an average accuracy of 46%. The mother confirms by phone that her responsibilities have been implemented as specified by the plan. (OVERHEAD #42)

Reflective question:

- Should more structure be given to the story map?
- Should the intensity, in regard to the number of times the strategy is taught during the week, be increased?

Modification of the plan: It is decided to add more structure to the story map by including specific questions James can use to help him identify and respond to each story element. (OVERHEAD #43) One-to-one intervention sessions will be increased to four times a week. The support teacher will call the mother to review progress and modifications to the plan.

Week 2

Action taken: The support teacher and the Title I teacher implement the modified plan.

Monitoring results: The data that are displayed on a graph and reviewed by the support teacher, the classroom teacher, and the Title I teacher demonstrate that James is now able to identify three of the four story elements with 65% accuracy. The support teacher and the Title I teacher further report that he is more willing to use the story map independently. Identifying specific events of the story continues to be a problem (50% accuracy). The average accuracy with which James identified the four elements in a one-to-one setting was 61%. The Title I teacher reports that the mother's experience concurs with those of the support teacher and the Title I teacher, especially during the last three evening sessions. (OVERHEAD #42)

Reflective questions:

- Should more structure be given to the story map specifically relating to the "event" element?

Modification of the plan: It is decided to add more structure to the story map by including specific example answers that relate to event questions James can use to help him identify and sequence specific events. (OVERHEAD #44)

Week 3

Action taken: The support teacher and the Title I teacher implement the modified story map. The mother is informed of modifications and continues to follow the plan.

Monitoring results: The graph depicting implementation data indicates that the additional modifications to the plan have resulted in James identifying story events with 70% accuracy. The identification of other elements has improved to 75% accuracy. The average accuracy in identifying the four story elements in a one-to-one setting was 74%. The mother reports parallel success at home. The classroom teacher laments that although James's progress in a one-to-one situation has increased, there has been little improvement (50% average) in identifying the story elements during the whole-class reading sessions that she continues to conduct. Now that the story-mapping strategy appears to be working in a one-to-one situation, the classroom teacher expresses that she is eager to implement it in her classroom with James and several other students. The Title I teacher indicates that James had expressed concern about the possibility of using the story map in a whole-class setting. He did not want to appear different to the class. This is considered by the support teacher, the Title I teacher, and the classroom teacher as a retention (application) issue that needs to be addressed before turning over the responsibility of implementation of the strategy to the classroom teacher. (OVERHEAD #42)

Reflective questions:

- What alternative strategies or modifications could increase James's use of the story-mapping strategy in a whole-group setting?

- Should some of the structure applied to the story map be reduced?

Modification of the plan: The support teacher and the Title I teacher plan a cooperative group activity for the entire class that will incorporate the use of the story-mapping strategy in small groups. *All* groups will use the story map. The classroom teacher will temporarily discontinue the whole-class approach during reading. Questions under each element on the story map will be discontinued except for the event element. However, the example answers under the event element will be eliminated.

Step II of Transition:

The support teacher or team member(s) identifies, develops, and implements an approach that enables the teacher to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Week 4

Action taken: The support teacher introduces (models) the use of a story map in the context of a cooperative group activity, "trio reading," that is used daily during reading instruction. (OVERHEAD #45) James is grouped with two boys. The mother continues to work with James in the evening. The Title I teacher works with him on a one-to-one basis on Monday and Wednesday mornings only.

Monitoring results: The support teacher and the classroom teacher meet at the end of the week and review the data. Both teachers agree that there has been little resistance on James's part to use the story map since all students are using it in the cooperative groups. James now identifies all elements of story with 80% accuracy.

Reflective questions:

- As a result of James's current progress, should the questions included to provide additional structure under "events" in the story map be eliminated?

Modification of the plan: It is decided to eliminate "event questions" and limit the story map to titles of the four elements. They also decided to continue "trio reading" during reading, now to be led by the classroom teacher. The Title I teacher will continue one-to-one instruction with the story map on Monday only. The mother will continue using the story map via the revised version at home. The support teacher will continue to monitor the intervention and provide guided practice to the classroom teacher.

Step III of Transition:

The support teacher or team member(s) provides the classroom teacher with guided practice to enable her to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Week 5

Action taken: The support teacher provides guided practice with the classroom teacher in "trio reading." The Title I teacher works one-to-one with James using the modified story map. The mother is made aware of the modified story map and continues evening reading sessions with James.

Monitoring results: The data reviewed via the graph by the support teacher, the Title I teacher, and the classroom teacher show that James continues to achieve an 80% accuracy in identifying characters, setting, and problem. Identification of events has dropped to 70% accuracy without the question cues. The average accuracy with which James identified the four elements was 77%. The mother estimates that he identifies all story elements with 85% accuracy. The support teacher and classroom teacher agree that the classroom teacher will not require further guided practice. (OVERHEAD #42)

Reflective questions:

- Should James continue to receive one-to-one instruction?
- Is James ready to make the transition in terms of being able to identify the story elements in a small-group to whole-group approach?
- Is James ready to identify story elements without the cues provided by the story map?
- Should the efforts of the mother's evening reading sessions be reduced or maintained?

Modification of the plan: The Title I teacher will focus efforts Monday morning only on the event element. The classroom teacher will continue "trio reading" on Monday through Thursday. The support teacher will focus on monitoring the intervention. The classroom teacher will attempt the whole-group approach with the class on Friday, identifying story elements with or without use of a story map. The use of the story map will be at the discretion of individual students. The mother will be asked to reduce evening readings to Sunday and Wednesday. The support teacher will continue monitoring the intervention.

Step IV of Transition:

The efforts of the support teacher or team member(s) fade in favor of the classroom teacher assuming responsibility for the strategy.

Week 6

Action Taken: On Monday through Thursday the classroom teacher implements "trio reading" without guided practice and changes to the whole class approach on Friday. The mother works with James on the evenings stipulated in the modified plan. The support teacher discontinues guided practice and continues to monitor the intervention.

Monitoring results: The data reviewed by the support teacher and the classroom teacher demonstrate that James maintained an average of 80% accuracy during week six in identifying the four story elements. On Friday he identified elements with 80% accuracy in a whole-group setting without use of a story map. The mother's report to the support teacher parallels this success. The support teacher, in reviewing class comprehension scores, found that the class average had improved from 80% accuracy to 85% accuracy during the intervention period. (OVERHEAD #42)

The reflective questions and modification of the plan will be addressed during the progress review meeting.

Outcome Phase

At the end of the intervention (verification) period the team meets to review progress and to answer the fundamental question that served as a basis for gathering data during the verifying phase: "Is James's learning rate sufficient to be maintained in a regular classroom?" To accomplish this analysis, several additional questions are answered by the team during the progress review meeting.

Analysis of Progress

The team reviews a summary of data collected during the intervention period that identifies instructional level and rates of acquisition and retention. To guide the team's analysis of data, the following questions are answered:

- How discrepant is James's performance from minimum classroom expectations?

The team, in response to this question, compares James's current (post-intervention) performance with the expectations of the classroom teacher that she considers acceptable minimal performance. In the example, it was noted that the class average in identifying story elements was 85% accuracy. James's accuracy rate was 80%. Although his average was slightly below that of the class, the team considered this score acceptable when compared to the class range of scores (75% to 90%). In addition, James's accuracy rate was 5% beyond the 75% accuracy rate established by the intervention plan goal.

The team agreed that James had not only closed the gap between his performance at the beginning of the intervention period and expected performance but had exceeded expectations established by the intervention goal.

- Is James's rate of learning adequate to predict reasonable progress?

To respond to this question, the team identified James's rates of acquisition and retention. In the example, a graph created by the support teacher presented data collected during the intervention period. The team, comparing data collected across the six week intervention period, found James's rate of acquisition to be consistent, as indicated by the positive trend of the data over time. By comparing his baseline accuracy rate in identifying story elements (45%) with that of week six data of the intervention period (80%), James's acquisition rate of identifying story elements was determined by his 35% increase in accuracy. (OVERHEAD #46)

In this example, the team determined James's rate of retention based on his generalization and transition to applying the structure of a story map from a one-to-one setting to a whole-class setting in identifying the elements of a story. The data gathered during the intervention period demonstrated that with the help of a cooperative group activity, James was able to make this transition, as evidenced by his identifying all four story elements in a whole-class setting with 90% accuracy.

The team analyzed both rates of acquisition and retention and agreed that James learned at a rate that demonstrated reasonable progress.

Determination of the Degree of Need

A review of James's adjusted implementation plan, along with input from those responsible for implementing interventions, provide valuable information that must be considered in reference to the following reflective questions:

- What additional personnel were required to achieve this progress?

The intensity and amount of support required to implement strategies and maintain instruction at instructional level for James are the focus of this question.

In the example, the support teacher, the Title I teacher, the mother, and the classroom teacher were responsible for implementing the strategies. The efforts of the support teacher and the Title I teacher were faded in favor of the classroom teacher incorporating the strategy into the classroom routine prior to the end of the intervention period. By the end of the intervention period, the classroom teacher had taken full responsibility for implementing the strategies in the classroom with the mother's continued support at home twice a week.

- What modifications and adaptations to the intervention plan were required to achieve this progress?

The kinds of modifications and adaptations to the strategies and the time it took to develop and implement them are addressed through this question.

In the example, the use of a story map provided a cuing mechanism for identifying story elements. The story map was given additional structure for a brief time during the intervention period by adding questions to the event story element. To assist in the generalization and transition of identifying story elements from a one-to-one setting to a whole class setting, a cooperative group structure was incorporated into the classroom routine. The team members agreed that several hours had been committed by team members to develop, implement, and adjust strategies during the intervention period. It was further agreed that only minor adjustments and minimal time would *now* be required to continue the implementation of the strategies in the classroom.

- Can the array (continuum) of services available in the regular education program be managed to continue the process of instructional support so that the progress made in the intervention can be continued? That is, what is the functional ability of the regular education program to maintain James at his instructional level in the current placement?

In the example, it was the opinion of the classroom teacher, and agreed upon by the team, that an instructional match could be provided and James's current acceptable rate of learning comfortably maintained by the classroom teacher. It was also agreed that should James in the future require further individualized instruction in using the story map, the Title I teacher could provide that support.

Team Decision

The team also considered the answers to the above reflective questions in their decision to either exit James from the IST screening process with continued support or recommend further evaluation through a Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE).

In its final analysis, the team considered their responses to all reflective questions addressed during the outcome phase in arriving at this team decision. It was agreed that James had surpassed the goal established by the team prior to implementation of the strategies and that he was functioning comfortably within the range of acceptable classroom performance. It was also agreed that the classroom teacher would be able to maintain James at his present level of functioning (80% accuracy in identifying story elements). Therefore, the team decided to exit James with continued support. No further evaluations were deemed necessary.

Plan for Continued Support

If the team's decision is to exit with continued support, it may be necessary to modify or redesign the intervention plan.

It was decided by the team that the classroom teacher would continue to give James the option of using the story map during whole-class reading instruction. Should he at some point in time require remediation in the identification of any of the story elements, the Title I teacher would provide support. The classroom teacher would monitor James weekly to ensure that both his instructional level and learning rate were maintained.

CHAPTER

4

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT FOR BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT ASSISTANCE

Rationale

Parent and professional requests for IST assistance are made in response to different kinds of student problems. The basis for a parent's or a teacher's concern leading to involvement with IST will usually be some difference between the student's behavior or performance and the expectations of the parent or classroom teacher. Problems of academic performance are often the primary focus of an assistance request since academics are the core of the standard school curriculum. However, student behavior and emotional problems are also frequently identified by the instructional support team as playing a significant role in the overall pattern of a student's school problems. Data collected during the 1993-94 school year indicated that 97% of students identified for IST displayed these types of affective problems. Every instructional support team's repertoire of instructional assessment practices must include both the knowledge base and the methods necessary for designing and implementing effective interventions to respond to behavioral and social-emotional problems. Therefore, it is recommended that a school psychologist or counselor is involved or assumes a leadership role in this training to ensure that this knowledge base is conveyed.

This chapter reviews several key principles of behavioral and social-emotional assessment that instructional support teams find useful for guiding the team's approach to solving problems in these areas. A set of methods and procedures for conducting an instructional assessment of a student's behavior and social-emotional characteristics is introduced. Many readers may recognize the conceptual background and the behavioral procedures for systematic assessment, intervention design, implementation, and school application as being based in the literature on functional behavioral assessment, recently operationalized in the Guidelines for Effective Behavioral Support (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 1995). These Guidelines offer a comprehensive model for the functional assessment of severe behavior problems that has been adapted for application to the screening and evaluation activities of the IST process.

The basic purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary description of the instructional assessment process where student behavior or student assistance issues (for example, coping skills deficits or the impact of cumulative stressors) are a principal concern of the instructional support team. Instructional assessment activities for academics are an essential component of this process which builds upon the specific academic assessment methods and procedures described in previous chapters of this manual.

Introduction

Instructional assessment is a systematic approach to solving student academic, behavior, and social-emotional problems. It works by identifying the key factors that have created or are encouraging a problem and then systematically changing these conditions so that the student demonstrates ongoing measurable improvement. Identifying the key factors or conditions (i.e., instructional variables) influencing the occurrence of a problem naturally leads to the identification of strategies that are more likely to solve the problem. In the IST process the team uses the principles and practices of instructional assessment through the four IST phases to specify the problem, operationalize the goal, test potential strategies, and measure the ongoing effectiveness of selected strategies. Systematic application of instructional assessment provides the instructional support team with reliable information about the most efficient and effective means to match school and classroom resources with student needs. Its effectiveness is enhanced by a team approach to problem solving where team procedures are designed to be both deliberative and collaborative, making it an approach that leads to positive outcomes for students and their teachers.

Finding the most effective IST interventions in an efficient and consistent way requires that members of the team work from a common conceptual framework. They must also possess the technical skills necessary to identify the key behavioral and social-emotional characteristics of the student and to specify the environmental conditions that are fostering the problem. Identification of these critical conditions guides the team to identify strategies that have a higher probability of success. The team then implements these strategies, using continuous measurement to assure their effectiveness.

Instructional Assessment for Behavior and the IST Process

Instructional assessment for behavior and social-emotional problems emulates the instructional assessment process for academic problems in its path through the four phases. As with academic problems the assessment brings the team's attention to student, curricular, instructional, and environmental variables in its search for the conditions that are fostering or influencing the problem. An instructional assessment for behavior or emotional needs looks for any functional relationships that may exist between the objectively-defined problem and the conditions that are present in the student's overall current situation. For example, a student's use of expletives during whole group instruction in the library may be found to be reinforced by a pattern of individual correction delivered immediately by the aide in the hallway. Another student's low social self-esteem may be found to be associated with the absence of social skills needed to resist the frequent exploitations by a schoolyard bully.

An assessment initiated due to problems in one area may lead to the identification of related problems in another area: an instructional assessment initiated in response to a behavior problem may identify academics as an impacting area; alternately, an instructional assessment initiated in response to academic problems may reveal student behavior characteristics (a student variable) and classroom management methods (an instructional variable) as critical variables. The team must maintain its perspective on the larger picture of the whole child as it investigates the effects of specific events and situations on specific behaviors.

Background

Instructional Assessment for Behavior: Functional Assessment

Instructional assessment for behavior problems can be called a functional assessment when the focus of the assessment is applied to the influence of events surrounding the occurrence of the target behavior in question. These events are generally referred to as antecedent events and consequents. Objective knowledge of the functional relationships between a problem behavior and the events and situations that occur before, during, and after the behavior in question can lead directly to behavioral interventions that are more likely to be both effective and workable. (OVERHEADS #47, #48, #49 & #50)

Many existing school discipline programs have relied on strategies that simply punish or suppress problem behavior. A functional assessment leads to strategies that encourage positive alternative behaviors while discouraging the problem behavior. The functional assessment approach tries to weaken the problem behavior while strengthening the positive alternative behavior. (OVERHEAD #51)

Three levels of assessment information are used in an instructional (functional) assessment for behavior. Broad assessment information is information gathered through interviews (with teachers and parents), rating scales, records review, and other forms of indirect assessment collected away from the actual behavior and its context. Specific assessment activities, such as a systematic classroom observation, provide direct assessment data gathered in real time about the behavior itself and the events surrounding the behavior. Both forms of information are then combined to construct possible explanations, or hypotheses, about the "before" and "after" events or circumstances that are encouraging the problem behavior.

These hypothetical relationships are sometimes confirmed by actually testing the influence of observed environmental events through an experimental or functional analysis in which the "variables are manipulated." A functional analysis confirms the influence of identified antecedent events and consequent events on the target behavior by actually using them to observe their effect on the targeted behavior. In this way, it gives better information that leads to the design of more effective interventions. (OVERHEADS #52 & #53)

The most complete use of broad and specific information is by means of a problem analysis procedure called a competing analysis. Information regarding identified setting events, antecedents, target behaviors, and maintaining consequences are first integrated into a conceptual framework that relates each problem behavior to the events and situations influencing its occurrence. (OVERHEAD #54)

Setting events are events or situations that are found predictably to influence the problem behavior, even though their action is from a greater temporal or physical distance, such as events that occur at a time or place removed from the immediate situation in which the problem behavior occurs. A family's journal may reveal, for example, that a student's use of expletives in conversation with peers during homeroom period occurs on days when he has refused breakfast before leaving for school. Tracking a student's behavior by scatterplot may reveal that he often engages in task refusal during math on days that he has had a bus referral for arguing and fighting with peers on the way to school.

Setting events can also include lowered teacher expectations for a student based on the perceived influence of some background trait (e.g., a past retention in grade), demographic characteristic (e.g., poverty), or other background characteristic that may create teacher uncertainty and thus alter the teacher's behavior toward the student. Environmental stressors in the student's life are readily understandable as setting events. (For more information on the impact of life stressors on school behavior and performance, please refer to related IST training on Elementary Student Assistance.)

Predictors are the events and circumstances found to be present just before the problem behavior occurs and can include the specific directions or commands given to the student, the number of persons in the situation, the difficulty level of the immediate activity, the particular adult(s) present in the situation, and various other possible influences on behavior. The key feature of a predictor is that it is temporally and physically close to the occurrence of the behavior. The problem behavior, then, is the single target behavior or set of concurrent behaviors that is the focus for the assessment, described in observable and measurable terms.

Maintaining Consequences: Patterns of Positive and Negative Reinforcement

The traditional behavioral approach assumes that a problem behavior is influenced or encouraged by environmental consequences or events that occur after the behavior, and either positively or negatively reinforce the behavior. In this view, environmental events are seen as somehow acting on the student and thereby influencing the student's behavior. A functional assessment of problem behavior includes an analysis of the consequent events for their role in maintaining the problem behavior. The purpose is to see whether the problem behavior in question leads to the occurrence of a "positive" event following the behavior, or whether it leads to a withdrawal of a "negative" event following the behavior.

In this behavioral view the student's behavior is thought to be influenced by its outcome; the behavior can be encouraged by an event that is pleasurable to the student, such as increased peer attention, or it can be encouraged by the withdrawal of some event, such as removal from a conflictual social situation. For example, one may ask whether a student's frequent fighting with older peers on the playground is leading to increased attention from admired older peers, or whether the fighting is serving to have the student removed from a group playground situation and the company of another student who has been abusive toward him after school hours. Collecting data that systematically identify the contingencies influencing the problem behavior serves as the basis for determining what form of intervention is likely to be more successful and workable for solving the problem in the school setting. (OVERHEAD #55)

Maintaining consequences are those events following the behavior which an assessment finds are important due to the influence of these consequent events on the occurrence of the behavior. Typically, they are found to encourage or reinforce the behavior in one of two fundamental ways. In the first way, the problem behavior is maintained by a pattern of reinforcement in which the problem behavior is found to increase when it is followed by the occurrence of a consequence that is perceived as positive by the student. A familiar example of this pattern of positive reinforcement is a problem behavior that is frequently followed by some form of direct attention, where the behavior seems to be maintained by the positive reinforcement of social contact.

The second form of maintaining consequence is one where the problem behavior increases because it serves to remove the presence of an aversive or negative consequence. In this pattern of negative reinforcement, a problem behavior functions to remove or avoid an unpleasant environmental event. For example, a student may engage in repeated complaining and defiant comments toward a teacher until the teacher succumbs to the student's behavior and withdraws academic assignments. This negatively reinforces the student's challenging verbal behavior by allowing him to escape assignments which the student perceives as aversive. In negative reinforcement, the behavior is reinforced because it leads to the removal of an aversive event.

Tools used in a functional assessment help to determine whether the problem behavior is being maintained by consequences that represent a pattern of positive reinforcement or one of negative reinforcement. Observation methods and other measures indicate whether the problem behavior leads to the student getting something (positive reinforcement) or avoiding something (negative reinforcement). Multiple samples of problem behavior collected through direct observation, coupled with the use of rating scales, provide information on the pattern of reinforcement that is maintaining the behavior. Observation systems, such as the Functional Assessment Observation Form, provide detailed information regarding events and situations that surround the problem behavior in question and also allow the observer, especially one who knows the student well, to judge whether the behavior is maintained by getting or avoiding something in the environment.

The Competing Analysis in Problem Identification and Goal Development

When enough information about the problem behavior and the environmental influences has been gathered, a competing analysis of the problem behavior(s) is completed. A competing analysis integrates assessment information about the problem behavior and about the events influencing the behavior. As a first step, information from broad and specific assessments are assembled into categories of setting events, predictors, problem behavior, and consequences. (OVERHEAD #53)

In the second step, desired behaviors are specified that will replace the problem behavior. The desired behavior represents a positive, adaptive replacement for the problem behavior. For instance, verbally aggressive behavior toward a popular high-status group of boys on the playground is maintained by attention from this group; the problem behavior might be replaced by learning skills at gaining entry to groups or joining games using adaptive non-aggressive means. Sometimes an alternative behavior can also be identified to teach the student an efficient and socially acceptable way to get or to avoid the maintaining consequence. For example, the student may be taught to ask for teacher assistance or to request a short break during math activities when the assessment suggests that the function of the problem behavior is to escape these activities. In such a case, it is presumed that the behavior is being maintained by environmental consequences in a pattern of negative reinforcement.

Instructional Assessment for Student Assistance Activities

Effective instructional support for students who display school behavior problems involves assessment through the identification of significant risk factors and the design and implementation of effective prevention activities before the effects of these risk factors become stable. Effective assessment and intervention design requires the involvement of the student's family as active participants and equal partners in the entire process. (OVERHEAD #56)

Risk factors are those conditions in a child's background, skills, history, support systems, and social environments that impact negatively on the student's academic or social development. Multiple risk factors have cumulative effects upon students, with their impact increasing exponentially and amplified by the number, duration, and intensity of the risk factors involved. Risk factors frequently include the impact of significant life stressors upon the student that involve events of significant personal loss, chronic or acute economic disadvantage, recurrent family mobility, physical/emotional impairment of self or family, or other various family stressors.

In addition to past or current life stressors, student risk factors often include features of the student or characteristics of the student's current social support systems. Student risk factors can involve low self-esteem or childhood depression, inadequate social skills, or other coping skill deficits. One student may habitually place the blame on others for all of his difficulties, while another student may routinely attribute his or her successes to "dumb luck," but blame himself for even the slightest performance shortcoming. Social skill development can be assessed through direct assessments of peer contacts at school, such as recess and lunchroom behavior, and through use of checklists and rating scales. Problems of aggressive, noncompliant, or disruptive behavior can be part of the picture as well. Negative student expectations and attitudes about school, self, and others are often involved.

The Important Role of Support Systems

It is crucial that the team understands the importance of the student's support systems for their influence on the student's adjustment in either a positive or negative direction. Environmental support systems such as family, friends, peer group, adult leaders, or counselors must be assessed for their present capacity to support the student and for their involvement in the intervention. As in all areas of instructional assessment, parent members of the instructional support team are invited to offer information on the support available from immediate family, friends, and relatives. Parenting practices and family relationships are important features of the student's social environment. The student's parents can be invited to discuss their discipline practices, monitoring, and supervision of the child. Parents may also offer insight about the student's relationships with family members, especially those that are particularly supportive.

One can find other opportunities for support through participation in organized sports, scouting, religious groups, or extended family. In addition, there may be a special relationship with a grandparent, babysitter, or trusted neighbor who is a source of guidance and support. The family may wish to discuss whether the student is involved in organized activities like scouting or sports. Still other support systems may involve religious education or contact with a local cleric.

Interventions for Student Assistance in the IST Process

The negative impact of risk factors that, left alone, might move the student toward eventual need for special education for emotional support are reduced by interventions that improve student behavior, teach new skills, and develop enhanced support systems. These interventions can be referred to as preventive interventions since they serve to prevent conditions from advancing to a point that requires more specialized instruction and leads to lowered expectations for academic and social behavior.

Preventive interventions should be based on a comprehensive assessment that provides a full understanding of the problem areas involved. These interventions target the specific needs of the student and have their fullest effect when implemented in a manner that alters the life trajectory of the student and sets the individual on a new path of academic success and developmental progress. Effective preventive interventions provide students with more skills with which to cope effectively and enhanced social support with which to face stressful life conditions. As with all IST interventions, effective preventive interventions are field-tested by team members and then organized into a coordinated plan through active and collaborative participation among all team members at the IST intervention-planning meeting. Effective preventive interventions are implemented as designed and are evaluated through continuous and systematic objective assessment.

Preventive interventions must be designed for the long term, well after they have first been demonstrated to be effective at producing positive changes in the student's skills, resources, or outlook. The long-term benefit of preventive interventions requires the ongoing implementation of effective strategies by key individuals in multiple support environments, following a routine that continues well after the fixed IST intervention period. Long-term classroom use and similar applications of IST interventions beyond the 30 day implementation period are considered benchmarks of effective practice for *all* identified students; however, the long-term application of effective preventive interventions across environments should be considered a *necessary* and *critical* condition to significantly improve the educational and life outcomes of students with behavior problems or social-emotional needs.

Degree of Need and Instructional Assessment for Behavior and Student Assistance

Students involved in instructional support due to behavior problems or social-emotional needs vary in their requirements for instructional support. Schools also vary in the resources available for providing assessment and intervention services for these students. Instructional support teams use instructional assessment to assess the student's needs for intervention support and compare that need with the school's ability to provide the assistance to assure the student's progress in the regular classroom. There are sufficient options within the IST procedural model for defining the support requirements for all but a few students with extraordinary needs. Most students will require only a portion of the assessment and support procedures described here. The task of the instructional support team is to assure that every student involved in the IST process receives the instructional support services necessary for demonstrating ongoing progress. This is defined as the student's continuous advancement through basic fulfillment of the instructional requirements and results in the provision of classroom instruction at the student's instructional level. Teams can use the technical resources summarized in this procedural model and the staff resources in their schools to create the conditions necessary for student success in the social environment of the school. (OVERHEAD #57)

Procedures of Instructional Assessment for Behavior and Student Assistance

The instructional assessment sequence for students with behavior problems and social-emotional needs is organized around the four IST phases. Instructional assessment for these students naturally incorporates the core elements of objective assessment, intervention design, intervention implementation, continuous measurement, and integration into daily routines. However, in keeping with the Guidelines for Effective Behavioral Support (PDE, 1995), the problem-solving steps and methods that an instructional support team employs are specifically designed to provide for the special requirements of students receiving instructional support for behavioral and social-emotional needs (Price, et al., 1989; Compas, 1987; Coie, et al., 1993). This specialization is apparent in the model's differentiation between:

- broad and specific assessment activities,
- broad and specific problem statements,
- long-term and short-term goal statements, and
- long-term and short-term intervention planning.

The distinction between broad and specific problems and long and short-term goal planning reflects real differences that exist in the kinds of problems that students demonstrate and in the real time it takes to make a substantial difference in a student's life.

Most problems can be defined in objective empirical terms that are specific to certain situations, certain skills, and specific levels of performance. This is the standard form for IST problem and goal statements and remains the key format for defining problems of behavior and social-emotional adjustment. However, a complete view of a student's problem(s) also requires a broad view that encompasses a description of the student's strengths, their repertoire of coping skills, past and current stressors, cultural and linguistic differences, expectations of self and others, medical background, and the availability of support systems. It is the broad view of a student's problem situation that offers the team an opportunity to summarize the competencies, characteristics, and social circumstances that may underlie the specific behavior or adjustment difficulties that he or she is experiencing.

Used together, specific and broad problem statements provide the team with a specific description of the performance problems that the student is exhibiting on a day-to-day basis, coupled with a summary description of the broad skills, attitudes, or support systems that appear to have an impact on the student's long-term adjustment. This information guides the team in its interventions to solve the specific identified problem on a short-term basis and provides the team with an outline of the types of support that the student may require for significant improvement in his or her situation over the long term. (OVERHEADS #58 & #59)

Entry Phase

Broad Assessment

During the entry phase of IST assessment process, broad information is compiled to provide an objective description of the behavior and performance problems, the characteristics of the situations in which these problems do and do not occur, the attitudes and expectations of the student, the attitudes and expectations of the adults responsible for the student, and the history of related problems or other issues that add to the formulation of the problem. The initial steps in the broad assessment involve the collection of indirect assessment information regarding the observed problems and the situations in which they occur. The critical steps at this point include the development of objective definitions of the behaviors and situations in which they occur and the development of a plan to specifically assess the problem.

As stated in Chapter 3, there are various methods available to accomplish these critical steps of entry phase instructional assessment. Separate problem-framing interviews with the professional(s) requesting assistance and the parent(s) can provide objective information regarding the problem behaviors, their characteristics, the situations in which they occur, and the strategies used so far to deal with the problem. The interviews also provide information regarding situations when the problem does not occur, student attitudes, teacher and parental expectations, and related issues. Comparisons can be made between situations in which problems do and do not occur to assist with problem analysis and eventual intervention design. Additional information from a review of records, relevant checklists, rating scales, and specialist reports can contribute to the overall picture of the problem. The checkpoint structure and reflective questioning process aids the team in organizing the information and making subsequent assessment decisions. Moreover, team members participating in collection of broad assessment information continually attend to questions at four levels of analysis which guides the team toward effective interventions:

- What are the observable characteristics of the problem behaviors and the situations in which they presently occur? In other words, what is the

specific problem?

- **What are the characteristics of the student's background, history, repertoire of skills, attitudes, or support systems that represent strengths on which to build, or risk factors that have the potential to impede improvement? In other words, what is the broad problem?**

- **What hypotheses are emerging that the team can test as it completes a functional assessment of the behavior problem?**

- **What hypotheses are emerging that the team can use in linking the student's specific problem with the broad problem?**

Specific Assessment

The broad information is assembled and integrated by team members to guide subsequent specific assessments. A set of initial hypotheses regarding the factors influencing the observable behavior or performance problem is drafted at this time to guide the assessment. Prominent among these factors is the possibility of an academic instructional mismatch between the student and the program, a factor which should always be either confirmed or ruled out. If a student demonstrates the entry skills needed for success in the curriculum, the balance of the instructional assessment may then focus on other instructional issues such as management routines and other features of the contexts in which the problems are occurring. Initial hypotheses regarding the student's background, skills, stressors, and support systems may also be offered and decisions made for collecting specific information. In dyadic or group collaboration, team members design the types and levels of specific assessments necessary to generate valid broad and specific problem statements. The assessment plan should be organized so that accurate and relevant information is collected that will foster the development of these statements. (OVERHEADS #58 & #59)

Specific assessment of a problem behavior can include completion of an A-B-C analysis, use of a scatterplot, or use of the Functional Assessment Observation Form (PDE, 1995). Other forms of systematic observation may also be indicated, such as

The State-Event Classroom Observation System (SECOS) often referred to as the "Saudargas" (Saudargas & Creed-Murrah, 1981), or the Academic Learning Time (ALT) format, described in Appendix III. The team's selection of methods is influenced by the nature of the problem behavior and the situations in which it is occurring. There are numerous formats available for systematic observation in addition to those listed; alternatively, the team may develop its own observation format based on principles of effective practice in systematic observation (Hintze & Shapiro, 1995).

Direct assessment of the student's response to the task demands of the instructional environment is usually required. This can include a direct assessment in the curriculum, an analysis of instructional conditions, a description of management routines, or an interview of the student during challenging tasks. Particular attention is naturally given to the student's entry level skills in situations where the problem behavior is occurring.

Specific assessment strategies also include the use of checklists, rating scales, the review of permanent products, or a review of records. An example of "freeware" available in the professional literature for specific assessment procedures is the Problem Behavior Questionnaire (Lewis, Scott & Sugai, 1994), a rating scale that links problem behavior with classroom events in a functional assessment. The Psychological Skills Inventory (Strayhorn, 1988) is a coping skills checklist and rating scale designed for child assessment that describes various coping skills and adaptive strategies in positive terms, rather than negative descriptors. This inventory helps the team focus on the student's strengths rather than his or her weaknesses or symptoms. Among the numerous published materials useful in specific assessment is the Social Skills Rating Scale (Gresham & Elliott, 1990) which describes a student's social skills repertoire from the teacher's and parent's separate vantage points.

Specific assessment information can provide baseline data for describing the student's performance problem in objective and measurable terms before any interventions are actually attempted as part of the IST process. It is useful to collect baseline data on more than one dimension of a student's problem. For example, the team may decide to count the number of disruptive outbursts that a kindergarten student displays in music and art over a given six day cycle. The same student's raw score on a brief self-esteem interview might be recorded as an additional baseline measure. This information could be further supplemented by rating the student on a rubric based on a hierarchy of skills for appropriately approaching school adults and asking for assistance. All of these forms of specific assessment are used to quantify the student's problem and may serve as the basis for separate problem and goal statements. As such, this information is used to track the student's progress in response to interventions and informs the team when interventions should be redesigned or replaced.

Hypothesis-Forming Phase

The Competing Analysis and the Search for Strategies

The addition of specific information in most cases will be sufficient for completing the framework of a competing analysis, representing an updated set of hypotheses about the problem behavior and its external influences that will guide the team to a specific problem statement. The analysis should summarize relevant setting events, predictors and maintaining consequences related to the problem behavior that was identified during the entry phase. This information can then be used to guide the team in its initial search for strategies. Research in behavior analysis provides a general set of guidelines for selecting strategies based on the hypotheses of a competing analysis. (OVERHEAD #53)

The most efficient strategies are those that exert the greatest effect on a student with the least direct effort by the student; these are strategies that alter setting events and antecedents. Clear and direct messages (Valentine, 1987) or use of precision commands (Jenson & Reavis, 1996) are examples of antecedent interventions which can have a significant effect without requiring complex change through new learning or skill development. Antecedent interventions are especially effective in the short term, when parents and teachers work together to alter predictors or setting events that are under the direct control of the adults in the system. This can include controlling the curriculum and other aspects of the instructional environment to assure an instructional match for the student in academic activities. The direct effects of antecedent interventions are often further enhanced by praise and other social rewards provided naturally to the student for his or her positive response to the changed antecedent. (OVERHEADS #60, #61 & #62)

Higher-order and longer-term forms of intervention are those that work by altering the maintaining consequences and by teaching desirable behaviors (PDE, 1995; Iwata, et al., 1993). Consequence strategies are strategies that interfere with the maintaining consequence and are the second most efficient means of intervention, after antecedent strategies. Blocking contingent access to whatever has been determined to be reinforcing the problem behavior (the maintaining consequence) and instead providing access to that preferred activity on a *random* basis is one approach to this problem. For example, a fourth grade student whose disruptive whining behavior is thought to obtain excessive teacher attention may be ignored for the whining while being provided occasional individual teacher comments and a pat on the back at random points during the day.

Direct instruction and guided practice in desirable behaviors to replace a problem behavior can take the form of a simple strategy but often represent a relatively complex intervention requiring ongoing support to the student and to the teacher. For example, a self-monitoring strategy may be acquired easily by one student when the desirable behavior is largely in the student's repertoire and the student only needs to learn the self-checking procedure; or, it may require much coaching and shaping if the desirable behavior is an altogether new skill. There are numerous published programs to help students build appropriate social interaction skills, such as skillstreaming (McGinnis, Goldstein, Sprafkin & Gershaw, 1984) and social skills training (Knapczyk & Rodes, 1996).

Strategies based on the competing analysis can be tested with the student in authentic contexts in the natural school setting or through analog trials in a more controlled environment. Strategies can be tested for their relevance to the problem, for their effect on the behavior, and for their ease of application in school environments. As mentioned earlier, baseline data should be collected on the student's performance on the focus task before an intervention is attempted; the effectiveness of a strategy during its initial trial is then graphed or otherwise documented and assists the team in strategy selection.

This period of strategy evaluation is crucial for the team to maintain trust and a true collaborative climate. All team members, and especially the classroom teacher, should be actively involved in the selection of possible strategies and in the review of their effect. Naturally, the classroom teacher should be invited to participate in any classroom trials of potential strategies. The student's teacher should also routinely be invited to observe the use of a potential strategy in analog situations in settings removed from the classroom.

Problem Identification

Information from the broad and specific assessments, the competing analysis, and the search for strategies are reviewed by key members of the team in the process of developing global and specific problem statements. The global problem statement offers a broad view of the student's current life adjustment, relevant cultural-linguistic background, academic performance, and availability of interpersonal support from support systems at home and at school. The specific problem statement reports the results of the competing behavior analysis, including specification of setting events, antecedents, problem behavior(s), consequent events, and the functional relationships among these that seem to be influencing the problem behavior. To summarize and compare these two types of problem statements, the global problem statement provides an overview description of the student's general social adjustment, repertoire of skills, impinging stressors, and support systems, while the specific problem statement brings the team's attention to the specific behavior or performance problem and its immediate situational context.

Global Problem Statement

The global problem statement provides a qualitative view of the student's present adjustment to environmental demands and includes input from the student's family as well as the findings of the social and coping skill assessments that have occurred up to this point. Its foundation is a review of student strengths and areas of competence, including any qualities that the parents cherish in the child and wish to share with the school. Coping skill strengths and weaknesses are summarized, coupled with a review of significant stressors or other environmental demands impacting upon the student. The role of family, peer, and adult support systems are also mentioned. Areas of suspected academic problems may be mentioned, but significant problems of learning require separate problem and goal statements. The global problem statement takes the form of a narrative, with special care given to avoid subjective characterization and to retain the team's focus on an objective description of student behaviors and performance.

Specific Problem Statement

The specific problem is described in behavioral terms and may take the form of a problem behavior, per se, or an observable performance problem involving coping or adjustment. A problem behavior might be tripping other students, while an observable coping problem might be tearful whispering in response to another student's teasing. The specific problem statement should specify the behavior itself in objective and measurable terms, the situations in which the behaviors occur, and the level of intensity, frequency, or duration of the behavior. This is the classic format for behavior problem statements. Team members may test whether their problem statement is, in fact, behaviorally stated by asking different members to demonstrate the behavior in question.

Goal Development

The development of goal statements in the IST process follows directly on the heels of the objective identification of the problem(s). Goal statements serve to describe the change in behavior or performance that the student will demonstrate as a result of IST intervention, where the problem statement represents baseline performance. The problem statement describes the student's starting point and the goal statement indicates how far toward expected or "typical" student performance the student will advance during the maximum six week IST intervention period. A goal statement provides an aiming point or constant standard for the IST against which the student's actual progress can be measured objectively and continuously. The goal statement also indicates the rate of change that the team considers reasonable based on the student's entry level and the effectiveness of the trial strategies.

In the IST assessment process, a goal statement does not represent the terminal outcome for a student as a result of involvement in the process. Instead, it represents a point along the path of gradual improvement for a student. A student's measured progress toward a particular goal should be used by the team as much to demonstrate the capacities of the school and family to intervene on the behalf of the individual student, as it may be used as an indicator of the student's capacity to respond to the intervention. Student progress toward the performance goal demonstrates to the team the system's capacity to support the student. The team may turn its efforts to institutionalize that support into standard routines during the transition in the last three weeks of the intervention period.

Short-Term Goal Statements

Short-term goal statements are derived primarily from the specific problem statement. They focus on specific behaviors in specific situations and are described in objective measurable terms. There are two approaches to setting goals in the behavioral area. First, an inappropriate behavior can be identified, with the goal being a decrease in that behavior. For example, a team may set a goal to decrease the number of disruptive call-outs per instructional period from 10 to zero. The second approach to goal setting involves identifying an appropriate behavior that is a positive alternative to or is incompatible with the inappropriate behavior. Goals in this format would specify an increase in the appropriate behavior. For example, an identified problem of making critical comments toward self and others could translate to a short-term goal that requires the student to offer positive self-statements and acknowledge a positive behavior of another student as criteria for performance.

Short-term goals are described in terms that are specific to the identified problem which the team is working to solve. They are written in terms that are descriptive of an objective change in student behavior that will occur before the end of the intervention period. Use of behavioral time-limited goal statements assumes that the accompanying interventions will frequently involve relatively rapid acquisition and maintenance of specific skills or behaviors, often through a program of direct instruction and guided practice. In a comprehensive approach to instructional support, these skills and behaviors often need to be maintained and supported beyond the intervention period. Therefore, for many students, the team must generate long-term goals to guide an intervention plan for a foreseeable future that extends weeks or months beyond the formal 30 day intervention period.

Long-Term Goals

For those students who require this level of instructional support, the long-term goal brings the focus of the team to creating ongoing interventions that teach behaviors, foster relationships, and provide external social supports. These interventions can result in the undoing of the cumulative effects of risk factors known to lead eventually to mental illness, criminal behavior, and related outcomes. The long-term goal guides the team's focus to issues of student well-being, general coping skills, support systems, and interpersonal relationships. This goal can target physical welfare, mental health, or features of personal care. It may address a student's longstanding academic deficits or anticipate future curricular expectations. The team also performs a critical function by engaging family members in short-term interventions and then translating that parental involvement into a long-term working relationship by which the natural support of the family can be strengthened.

One purpose for using the IST to conduct long-term intervention planning well beyond the intervention period derives from the cumulative effects of multiple risk factors on children and the critical role that targeted prevention activities can play in counteracting the otherwise enduring effects of these risk factors (Coie, et al., 1993). It has been demonstrated repeatedly that preventive interventions work best when they are targeted to the needs of the individual student and are consistently provided before the effects of risk factors become stable. Clearly, the IST process is not simply a logistically convenient avenue for devising and managing long-term preventive interventions. Given its reliance on direct assessment information and its capacity to organize ongoing forms of support to students before the effects of risk factors become fixed, the IST can play a decisive role in altering the life trajectory of these students.

A second purpose for long-term intervention planning is the need to insure the generalization and application of new behavioral skills across all environments. New skills of self-management or recently acquired alternative skills may only just be established when the end of the formal intervention period draws near. The long-term goal can describe the need for generalization of new skills across different settings, thus forming the basis for an intervention plan that provides the student with coaching and support in the use of new skills throughout the school day. In certain instances there will also be need for a crisis management plan. The long-term goal can describe the potential crises, whether behavioral or stressor-induced, and guide the team to develop interventions to provide a contingent response, if required.

Long-term goals may present indirect indicators of improvement in adjustment or coping skills, such as the goal that a student will be named by his class peers as one they would invite to play after school, as indicated by a sociogram. Use of a rubric for objectively measuring improvement in certain social skills would be another example of measuring long-term change in the student's social adjustment. The long-term goal might be for the student to earn three consecutive ratings of "4" or higher on an objective social skills rubric where the criterion for "4" says "the student will ignore insults and teasing by peers during recess and ask for time with his teacher at the next appropriate opportunity to discuss his feelings and practice stress reduction."

Long-term goals are not always necessary or feasible. Many students with behavior problems will not require an extended period of systematic intervention beyond the typical IST interval. It is also possible that long-term intervention planning will be beyond the present resources of some teams. Other teams may provide long-term support less formally through interventions such as support groups, social skills instruction, programs of peer mediation, or conflict resolution. Research indicates that such preventive interventions are generally most effective when coordinated across different systems (support group and classroom) and between specialties (support teacher, teacher, and parent) (Coie, et al., 1993).

The reader should note that long-term interventions do not represent an extended or additional intervention period. The IST intervention period remains 30 school days in length. The IST must make a "yes or no" decision about a student's possible need for multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE) no later than 60 school days after the date of the initial request for IST assistance submitted by the parent(s) or a school professional.

IST Intervention-Planning Meeting

The development of the intervention plan for behavior problems is a collaborative undertaking. It relies on a set of decision-making procedures that assures full involvement by all team members, while maximizing the technical quality and potential effectiveness of the resulting plan. At this meeting, the team first conducts a brief systematic review and discussion of the following items:

- the request for assistance and subsequent assessment;
- the specific and broad problem statements; baseline data measuring the student's performance in defined situations;
- the short-term and (if needed) long-term goal statements; and
- a set of tested strategies that have already been found to be effective.

This information should be familiar to most team members since it represents the collaborative work of the team during entry and hypothesis forming. The team procedure should include structured opportunities for questions and exchange of information until the team arrives at consensus on the defined problems, goal statement(s), baseline data, and piloted strategies.

The team works from this common information base to develop an action plan through which the team will:

- evaluate and select strategies,
- agree on intervention frequency/intensity,
- designate groups responsible for different tasks,
- arrange for training and preparation,
- develop a design for systematic ongoing measurement of intervention success, and
- arrange for intervention monitoring, ongoing support, and redesign.

Students involved in instructional support for behavior problems will often present unique challenges to the collaborative problem-solving approach that is the IST process. Each team should expect that behavioral situations will call for greater vigilance in establishing and maintaining collaborative relations among team members. The IST intervention-planning process requires the shared perspectives and full participation of all team members, most critically the student's family.

The likelihood of gaining trust and ensuring full parent participation is often seriously reduced in the aftermath of school-to-parent contacts over behavior incidents and subsequent disciplinary actions. Disciplinary actions generally do little to create a sense of inclusion, affection, or control on the part of the parents; moreover, the uniform implementation of the school disciplinary policy and procedures can present a significant hurdle to the later development of a collaborative relationship between parents and school. The team can consequently be deprived of hope and optimism almost before it gets started. Respectful open communication with the family during contacts on issues of school policy and discipline helps to nurture trust and overcomes the natural tendency to assign blame for a student's problems.

The IST intervention-planning process for students with behavioral and social-emotional needs must represent the shared view of all team members and this perspective can only be built on trust. To assist further in maintaining that trust, the IST intervention plan must be clear and unambiguous. The structure of the team meeting, the documentation of the intervention plan, and subsequent team communications should be structured to assure that:

- all team members acquire and maintain a common operational definition for student success in response to IST interventions;
- all team members (especially parents) agree on what the interventions will look like;
- there is agreement as to how often and at what intensity interventions will be implemented and what resources will be needed to put them into place;
- it is clear who is responsible for intervention design and implementation, including strategy evaluation and possible redesign; and
- designated team members have all the support required to conduct their assigned responsibilities effectively.

Short-Term and Long-Term Interventions

The content and scope of the intervention plan reflects the scope of the goal statements developed during hypothesis forming. All intervention plans for behavior concerns have a short-term intervention plan as its base. Short-term interventions frequently take the form of antecedent strategies, setting event strategies, alternative skills strategies, or consequence strategies. For example, earning tokens for appropriate behavior from a school store is a type of consequence strategy. Using teacher proximity or clear and direct messages to influence behavior are antecedent strategies. The use of backup techniques is a type of extinction procedure or consequence strategy (Valentine, 1987; Iwata, 1993). Social skills training, anger management training, self-control instruction, and relaxation training represent different alternative skills strategies. All four types of strategies involve either teaching skills, managing consequences, or altering problem situations in order to change student behavior. The student "unlearns" one set of behaviors which are replaced with another group of preferred behaviors.

Some students require long-term intervention. This level of intervention is designed to make a significant long-term difference in the student's life. Long-term interventions can be implemented and established during the intervention period, or the team may decide to defer systematic long-term intervention until the review meeting (during outcome). Long-term intervention is accomplished through continuous intervention with the student in activities that:

- acknowledge the family's strengths and help to expand their skills;
- work actively with the family in any decision about the student;
- expand and strengthen the student's coping skills base;
- utilize natural support systems in the family and community;
- involve the student in support groups and positive social networks;
- help the student apply newly learned skills across different settings; and
- coordinate school interventions with those of other agencies and providers.

The long-term plan works more at the foundation of a student's coping skills, support systems, and general capacity for adjustment. Its overarching purpose is to work collaboratively and in a supportive fashion with the student's family. By establishing ongoing interventions that promote coping skills and develop support systems, the school/family team enables the student to face future challenges and stressful life events in a more adaptive and productive fashion. The fundamental purpose of long-term interventions is to support the student to follow an altered life path that increases the likelihood for graduation, employment, positive community involvement, successful coping, and healthy relationships.

The long-term plan is coordinated with the short-term plan to design structured experiences for generalizing and applying newly acquired behavioral and coping skills to multiple settings beyond those of the 30 day intervention period. The classroom teacher is joined by other members of the team (especially pupil services specialists) in developing and coordinating the delivery of long-term interventions with periodic meetings to assess growth and to redesign the plan, as needed. Based on student need and local resources, the team may decide to initiate long-term support concurrent with short-term interventions, or the team may opt to wait until the end of the 30 day intervention period. Examples of long-term interventions include relationship enhancement such as mentoring or peer tutoring, social skills training, wellness promotion, esteem-building activities, support groups, and community or school-based support systems.

Mental health specialists from district pupil services and community agencies have significant roles and responsibilities in the assessment and intervention process for students involved in the IST process for behavior concerns. Short-term and long-term intervention plans are coordinated and integrated with treatment plans for "wraparound" services. With parental permission, an instructional support team could conceivably become a multi-agency, multidisciplinary, problem-solving team where the school team is joined by caseworkers, counselors, social workers, or other specialists. When instructional support for students with problems of behavior and social-emotional adjustment require the coordination of educational interventions with health care, children's services, and various mental health systems, one member of the IST should be assigned to serve as the school's liaison with other agencies to maintain communication and coordinate ongoing interventions.

Verifying Phase

Implementing Interventions Effectively

Complete implementation of interventions that will make a significant difference in a student's behavioral and social-emotional adjustment requires the team to address three conditions that assure quality outcomes (Tilly and Flugum, 1995; Telzrow, 1995). These conditions are concerned with the *content* of the interventions that are to be implemented, the *systems* in which the interventions are to be implemented, and the interpersonal *processes* that the team follows in testing and carrying out the interventions. Assurance of high-quality IST outcomes follows from the simultaneous use of procedures across the four phases that:

- exert control over the effectiveness of a strategy implemented in individual or group settings (content),
- facilitate integration of validated strategies into routine use in critical settings (systems), and
- enhance and maintain trust, motivation, and mutual respect among all team members (process).

The content of an intervention is the intervention itself and all assessment, measurement, training, monitoring, and technical support activities that make the strategy effective. During the verifying phase, the IST assures the quality of intervention content by having assigned members implement the actual strategies and procedures that were defined in the intervention plan and by modifying an intervention whenever necessary. The team members assigned to a strategy are responsible for faithfully carrying out the strategy that the team described in the student's intervention plan, using an operational definition of the strategy if possible; they must be able to assure the team that the strategy was given a credible trial in the classroom or other setting. By measuring and analyzing the student's initial response to the intervention, the team may decide to adjust or totally redesign the strategy to make it fully effective. As in the example case in Chapter 3, this is typically accomplished at regularly scheduled checkpoints during intervention implementation. For example, it may be necessary to increase the frequency of a strategy's use or staff support to ensure its effectiveness. Such redesign should occur as soon as possible after it is initiated to allow time for full implementation of its refinement or replacement.

Teams also ensure effective intervention content by practicing frequent and continuous measurement of student response to interventions. This process began with direct assessment of student performance in the collection of baseline data during hypothesis forming. Progress measurement proceeds throughout the verifying phase. Intervention effectiveness is continuously assessed so that the student's improvement can be compared with baseline performance. The use of a "time series analysis" using visual graphs to represent change is considered a superior form of measurement (Marston & Tindal, 1995) and provides feedback to both adults and student. The resulting information gives the team the means for measuring progress toward the goals of the intervention plan and for weighing student rate of progress relative to the resources required to achieve it. This ultimately will serve as the database for estimating the student's degree of need and possible need for multidisciplinary evaluation.

An effective IST works together to develop strategies and define responsibilities among its members in ways that will lead to the ongoing application of effective strategies by those closest to the student in everyday settings. Instructional support teams are effective within systems when they define team roles and activities to include a recognized procedure for guiding the transition from shared problem ownership and responsibility to primary ownership and responsibility by those in direct contact with the student, typically the classroom teacher and family members.

All team members must share in the transition effort to find opportunities for ongoing routine and contextual application. Regularly scheduled checkpoints to review the student's progress provide the collaborative structure to accomplish this. Collaborative teamwork may involve assisting teachers to review structures and schedules within the classroom or inviting parents to work together to develop effective strategies for use in the home. Ultimately, transition to routine natural contexts is facilitated by designing strategies that are simple to implement, or demonstrably effective or positive in their approach, making them more readily accepted at school and at home.

The demands of collaborative teamwork for students who need instructional support for behavior concerns are especially great. In the midst of a student's repeated disruptive behaviors in the classroom, it would be reasonable for a teacher to feel abandoned both personally and professionally, if social support is absent or late to arrive. The ongoing team collaboration needed to establish interventions, as well as the frequent checkpoints to monitor the student's progress, provide social structure and support effective interpersonal team processes. In this way, team members provide encouragement as well as technical support to each other as an intervention plan is implemented.

Outcome Phase

The outcome phase of the IST process is the culminating checkpoint in the IST's assessment and problem-solving process. The student's response to interventions and the resources required to achieve their maximum effect are analyzed to determine the student's degree of need for instructional support or other services and programs, including the possible need for special education.

Team members pool the information gathered from assessments and ongoing interventions at the review meeting. They review the request for assistance, the broad and specific assessments, the problem and goal statements, the initial intervention design and implementation, and the measured effectiveness of all interventions in use at the time. The competing analysis, the short-term and long-term goal statements, and the content of the global problem statement are particularly salient pieces of information in the review process for students involved in IST for behavior concerns.

Objective information regarding intervention content serves as the nucleus of the review meeting. Team members assigned to different interventions summarize each strategy and share student response data (preferably in graphic form). These data describe the student's demonstrated mastery of skills, attitudes, or behaviors that were the focus of IST intervention and are expressed as units of acquisition and retention of new learning over time.

Staff time and other resources involved in all aspects of the intervention are described and the team's success at integrating selected strategies into classroom routines and other settings are reviewed. This information allows the team to weigh the student's acquisition and retention of new learning relative to the system's effort required to produce that learning. The capacity of the school environment to maintain the student's progress at his or her instructional level for the foreseeable future is then evaluated. Using this information the team determines whether the student displays extraordinary need for instructional support and should be referred for a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE).

The team also identifies the strategies and support systems that have proven both workable and worthwhile. They then assemble the organizational structures and construct a plan to continue the interventions and support systems that have proven effective. In some instances the classroom teacher, counselor, and others can continue these efforts without peer support. However, many times there is value in organizing an informal working group of two or more who can maintain motivation and provide assistance when needed; the team should consider creating such ad hoc teams to provide mutual support in the use of strategies beyond the intervention period.

Certain students need a level of instructional support that systematically pursues an integrated approach to ongoing and long-term behavioral intervention, skill development, and social support. At the review meeting, the team carefully considers the long-term goals that were established for the student and his or her need for long-term intervention. If such a need is indicated, this level of intervention is developed through the design of a long-term intervention plan and is provided by a formally identified team of professionals and parents that periodically reports back to the IST.

Long-term interventions often support the continued use of short-term interventions in typical school settings as well as encourage the generalization of recently acquired skills to other settings. In addition, the long-term intervention plan has as its overriding goal the implementation of skill-building programs and interpersonal relationships that will gradually become the foundation for a more healthful life outcome for the student. Long-term interventions might include, for example, programs in social skills, decision-making skills, anger management, or stress reduction. These could be delivered in school or community-based support groups or skills-training groups. Long-term intervention should always be coordinated with local agencies and counselors or other specialists who are working with the student and his family.

Some long-term intervention plans require the development of a behavior management plan, in which case the student has likely been recommended for a multidisciplinary evaluation for special education. Long-term plans can also be supplemented with a crisis management plan and structured plans for team maintenance. As always, continuous measurement of student response to interventions is a necessary tool for assuring the effectiveness of any direct interventions.

Ultimately the goal of any intervention plan is to achieve its obsolescence. There are students with minimal to moderate support requirements who will require no formal plan per se; for these students individual teachers, parents, and specialists can employ everyday means of communication and coordination. Long-term intervention plans for students who require a more intensive level of support should be reviewed and revised, as necessary, at scheduled intervals until they are no longer needed. Transitions from elementary to secondary grade level programs may accompany transition of responsibility from ISTs to student assistance teams for long-term intervention. As with the implementation of any IST intervention, the local team and the school it represents must assess their capacity to provide support to students and staff, restricted only by the limits of local resources and by their capacity to envision a better outcome for the student.

CHAPTER 5

OVERHEADS/ TRAINING SUGGESTIONS

Basic Training Goals:

1. Develop a foundation for instructional assessment.
2. Use assessment to guide decisions about curriculum and instruction.
3. Apply principles of effective instruction to produce effective learning conditions for students who are at risk of academic failure.
4. Apply principles of elementary student assistance, effective communication, and functional assessment in the context of instructional assessment for students who are experiencing school adjustment difficulties.
5. Match appropriate strategies to areas needing instructional support.

Oh #1

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5. Match appropriate strategies to areas needing instructional support.

Oh #1

* * *

Training Suggestions

Present the goals on an overhead transparency.

Reaffirm that while some foundation work is essential to build a case for using instructional assessment practices with students who are at risk of academic failure, we know that classroom teachers are realists. They will want to know about specific intervention strategies, and in particular *how* to apply specific strategies directly within the instructional context of the classroom. The ultimate focus of the instructional assessment training, therefore, should be upon helping the classroom teachers become strategic users of the various intervention strategies in the assessment/teaching process.

If time permits, ask the support team members to reflect upon the specific assessment needs of their buildings and to share their thoughts with other teams. This can help crystallize the assessment training needs of each support team.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Instructional assessment can be used for all students in any setting.

2. Instructional assessment is a collaborative inquiry/problem-solving process.

3. Instructional assessment is systematic and proceeds through overlapping phases within the IST process.

4. Instructional assessment decisions are based on analysis of ongoing data collection.

5. The best way to learn instructional assessment is to *do it.*

Oh #2

Assumptions

1. Instructional assessment can be used for all students in any setting.
2. Instructional assessment is a collaborative inquiry/problem-solving process.
3. Instructional assessment is systematic and proceeds through overlapping phases within the IST process.
4. Instructional assessment decisions are based on analysis of ongoing data collection.
5. The best way to learn instructional assessment is to *do it.*

Oh #3

* * *

Training Suggestions

Present the overhead and elaborate that these assumptions are offered in order to build an understanding that instructional assessment is a **process not an event** and that it is a useful and necessary teaching tool. Use the information in the text (pages 5 & 6) to establish a foundation for the meaning of instructional assessment and the processes and procedures used to implement it.

1. Although this training focuses on individual instructional assessment in the context of the Instructional Support Team process, instructional assessment is not limited to a particular population in a particular place at a particular time. It is a process that can and should be practiced in the various contexts in which assessment occurs in school. It can be used at the elementary, middle, and secondary school levels in general, remedial, and special education. As teachers develop their skills with instructional assessment, these practices and procedures become routine and essential aspects of their teaching repertoire.

2. Instructional assessment is not done in a vacuum by one person. It is a process whereby data are gathered by a number of persons who work together closely and make mutual collaborative decisions. The driving force of instructional assessment is the search for answers to critical questions regarding the student's instruction and learning. Joint reflection on the gathered data helps to ultimately find what works for the child in the classroom.

3. Instructional assessment cannot be approached haphazardly or left to chance. Systematic forms of assessment increase the likelihood of gathering valid and reliable data. In the IST process, instructional assessment is defined by four general phases (entry, hypothesis forming, verification, outcome) which are interactive and overlapping, creating a dynamic system of searching for what works for the target student while maintaining consistency in practice.

4. As the data are gathered, instruction begins to change. Each adjustment or modification made to instructional methods, materials, or the environment needs to be monitored. The analysis of this additional data yields more precise information on which to base more accurate instructional decisions which further enhance student learning. An analytical eye needs to be focused on watching how the student responds to the alignment of assessment and instruction over time.

5. It is one thing to talk about instructional assessment, but the best approach is to get busy and begin doing it. Experience shows that practice in instructional assessment using real students with real problems builds confidence and expertise in knowing what and how to assess and to do this comfortably in a collaborative atmosphere.

P. L. 94-142/I.D.E.A. States That:

"Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that **education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."**

Oh #3

Federal Regulations
300.541 and 300.543 State That:

"A team may determine a child has a specific learning disability if the child does not achieve commensurate with his or her age and ability levels...**when provided with learning experiences appropriate for the child's age and ability levels... which is not correctable without special education and related services."**

Oh #4

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Oh #3

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Oh #4

* *

Training Suggestions

Overheads #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, and #8 are presented to clearly state the intent of federal and state laws and regulations and their influence on school-based assessment and evaluation practices, particularly for decisions related to the delivery of special education services.

Overhead #3 is quoted from the Federal Law 94-142/IDEA, while overhead #4 is quoted from the Code of Federal Regulations which were written to guide the implementation of that law.

Present overheads #3 and #4 separately. Stress the bold portion of each overhead. Develop an understanding of the need for providing services in the regular classroom and for establishing intervention periods in regular education which could preclude the need for special education consideration. Review the learning disability regulation and commentary to emphasize this last point. Reconfirm that the intervention period should *precede* as well as provide an appropriate process for screening students for special education eligibility.

Draw participants' attention back to the legal documents which obviously support the current movement toward inclusive practices for special education students. Engage them in a discussion about past practices related to special education programs.

Section 342.24 (f) of the Pennsylvania Standards states:

"The screening and evaluation process shall be the **systematic determination of the degree to which a student needs instructional support and special education services and programs."**

Oh #5

In the IST assessment process:

The degree of need is the student's measured instructional level compared to the functional ability of the regular education program to maintain that level in the student's regular class.

342.24 (f)

PA Standards for Special Education

(Chapter 342)

Oh #6

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342.24 (f)

PA Standards for Special Education

(Chapter 342)

Oh #6

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Training Suggestions

Overheads #5, #6, and #7 present Pennsylvania policy information from Chapters 14 and 342 which deal with special education services and programs. The general provisions of these chapters are typically referred to as the Special Education Regulations (Chapter 14) and Standards (Chapter 342). A quick reference document called the side-by-side version of these Standards and Regulations can be acquired from the Bureau of Special Education. At some point in instructional support team training, this document should be provided to participants and may be referenced here.

Present overheads #5 and #6, emphasizing that this screening and evaluation process must be **systematically applied** to provide **relevant data** from which to make pedagogical decisions and **longitudinal comparative analysis** of the student's response to intervention for determining the need for special education programs and services. This determination is referred to as the "degree of need."

Further emphasize that static single measurement and evaluation tools of the past cannot provide the relevant data needed for such important decisions. These data can only be derived by **ongoing systematic measurement** of the student's performance within the context of the regular classroom where intervention is provided in the form of modifications and adaptations, if need be, and appropriately utilizes the **array of regular education services** to provide instruction at the student's instructional level. The IST process of instructional assessment includes these characteristics of effective instruction/assessment which will be discussed in further detail later in this training.

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

shall include an instructional evaluation consisting of an assessment of the basic academic content that the student is expected to learn.

342.25 (j)
PA Standards for Special Education

Oh #7

The Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE)

shall include an instructional evaluation consisting of an assessment of the basic academic content that the student is expected to learn.

342.25 (j)
PA Standards for Special Education

Oh #7

* * *

Training Suggestions

Instructional assessment in the IST process is functionally linked to the multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). Section 342.25 (j) of the Pennsylvania Standards for Special Education states that "Evaluation of students suspected of being exceptional and in need of special academic skills **shall include an instructional evaluation consisting of an assessment of the basic academic content that the student is expected to learn**, shall yield the student's rate of acquisition and the student's rate of retention [learning progress over time] and shall result in a determination of the type and quantity of instructional support that is required to maintain the student at the student's instructional level." (parenthetical information added)

Present overhead #7. Emphasize that this Standard indicates that the instructional evaluation will not consist of a static testing situation, but will be based on an **ongoing analysis** of the student's responses to **effective instruction** in the **regular classroom curriculum**. These requirements are complementary to and go hand-in-hand with instructional procedures used in the IST process. They also reflect the intent of PL 94/142/IDEA (see overheads #3 and #4) and the movement toward authentic forms of assessment in regular education (see overhead #8).

CHAPTER 5
State Policy on Assessment

- authentic systems of assessment
- attention to student variability
- high levels of achievement
- improvement in curriculum and instructional practices

Oh #8

CHAPTER 5
State Policy on Assessment

- **authentic systems of assessment**
- **attention to student variability**
- **high levels of achievement**
- **improvement in curriculum and instructional practices**

Oh #8

* *

Training Suggestions

- **authentic systems of assessment**

Stress the need for assessment to be curriculum-based. This emphasis is away from using standardized assessments in favor of using methods which are more naturalistic. By using authentic systems of assessment and factoring in the teacher's expectations, assessors get a clearer picture of the student's ability to succeed in the classroom. Some examples of authentic assessment include students' work samples, portfolios, demonstrations or performances, written work by students, and examinations developed by teachers to assess specific student learning outcomes. (see § 5.232 School District Assessment [d] and [e])

- **student variability**

Chapter 5 calls for schools to recognize that students achieve at different rates for a variety of reasons. Schools are also called upon to be flexible to "meet the diverse needs of their diverse learners." (see § 5.2 Purpose [4])

- **high levels of achievement**

Chapter 5 recognizes that all students are capable of high levels of achievement and that schools are responsible to assist students to achieve the highest academic standards. Authentic forms of assessment, which provide an appropriate level of challenge for students, enable them to reach higher levels of achievement.

- **improvement in curriculum and instructional practices**

Authentic systems of assessment require modifications of or adjustments to instructional practices. Through authentic assessment systems, needed adjustments in the instruction will be identified. The expectation is that these adjustments to instruction will result in increased student performance levels.

BASIC PRINCIPLE

EVERY STUDENT CAN LEARN

It is where the student enters, the size of the learning set, and the pace of instruction which varies and must be adjusted to create an instructional match for the student.

Oh #9

BASIC PRINCIPLE

< EVERY STUDENT CAN LEARN >

It is where the student enters, the size of the learning set, and the pace of instruction which varies and must be adjusted to create an instructional match for the student.

Oh #9

* * *

Training Suggestions

According to Chapter 5, educators in Pennsylvania are expected to teach under the guiding principle that every student *can* learn.

Present the overhead, showing just the top portion.

Ask participants, "Did you ever teach a lesson that bombed?" (The answer will be a resounding "Yes".) "What do you think went wrong?" (Solicit answers from several participants.)

When a student does not seem to be learning, it is usually because certain variables have not been taken into account when planning and delivering instruction:

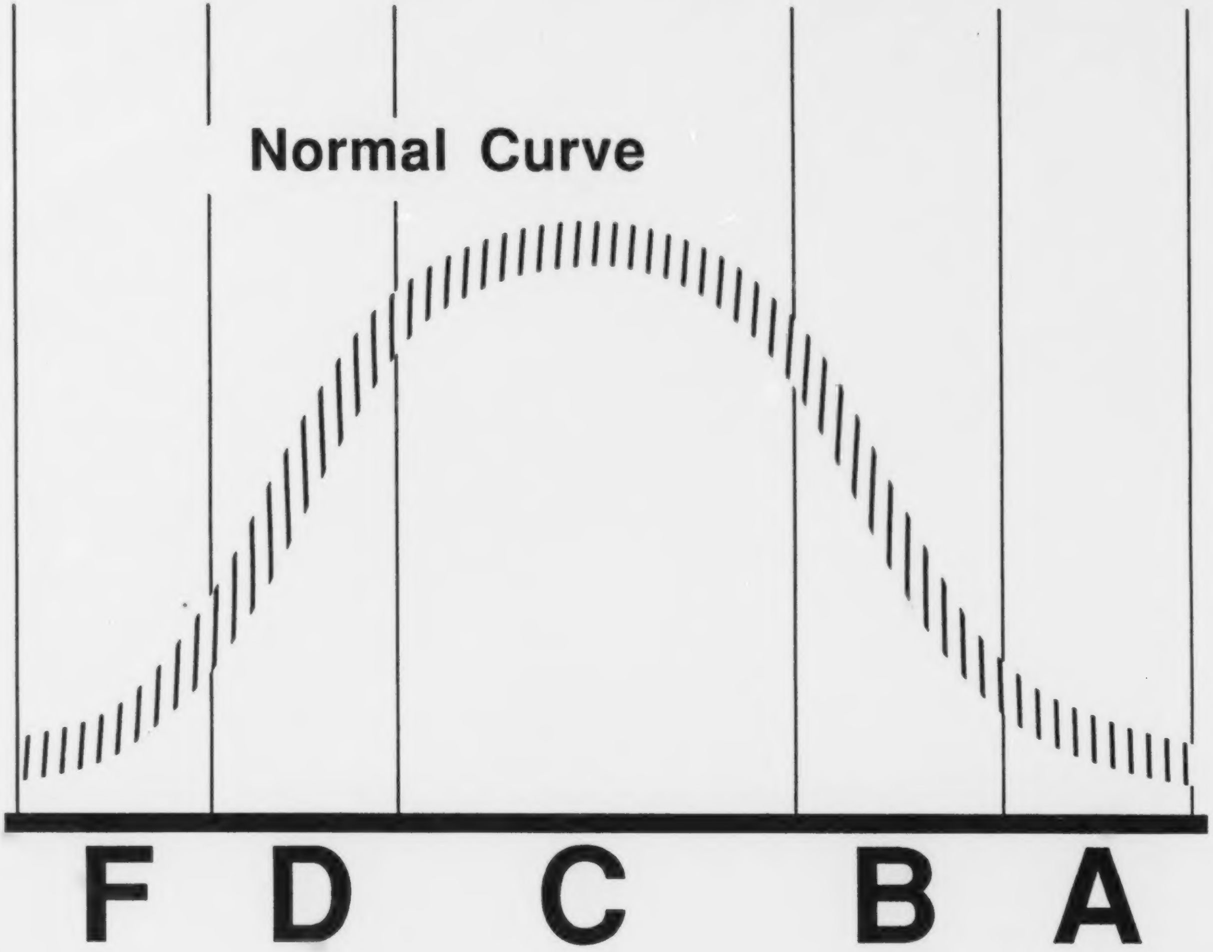
1) Where the student(s) enters. Prior knowledge and other learner variables influence the success or failure of instruction.

2) The size of the learning set. Learners will shut down if too much information is expected to be learned.

3) The pace of instruction. Students vary in the speed at which they can take in, retain, and apply new information. Teachers who expect this pace to be uniform for all students are doomed to failure; unfortunately, the failure is more often attributed to the student.

Show the bottom portion of the overhead and emphasize that these three factors must be adjusted to create an instructional match for each student. This concept is integral to instructional assessment and is further developed later in the training.

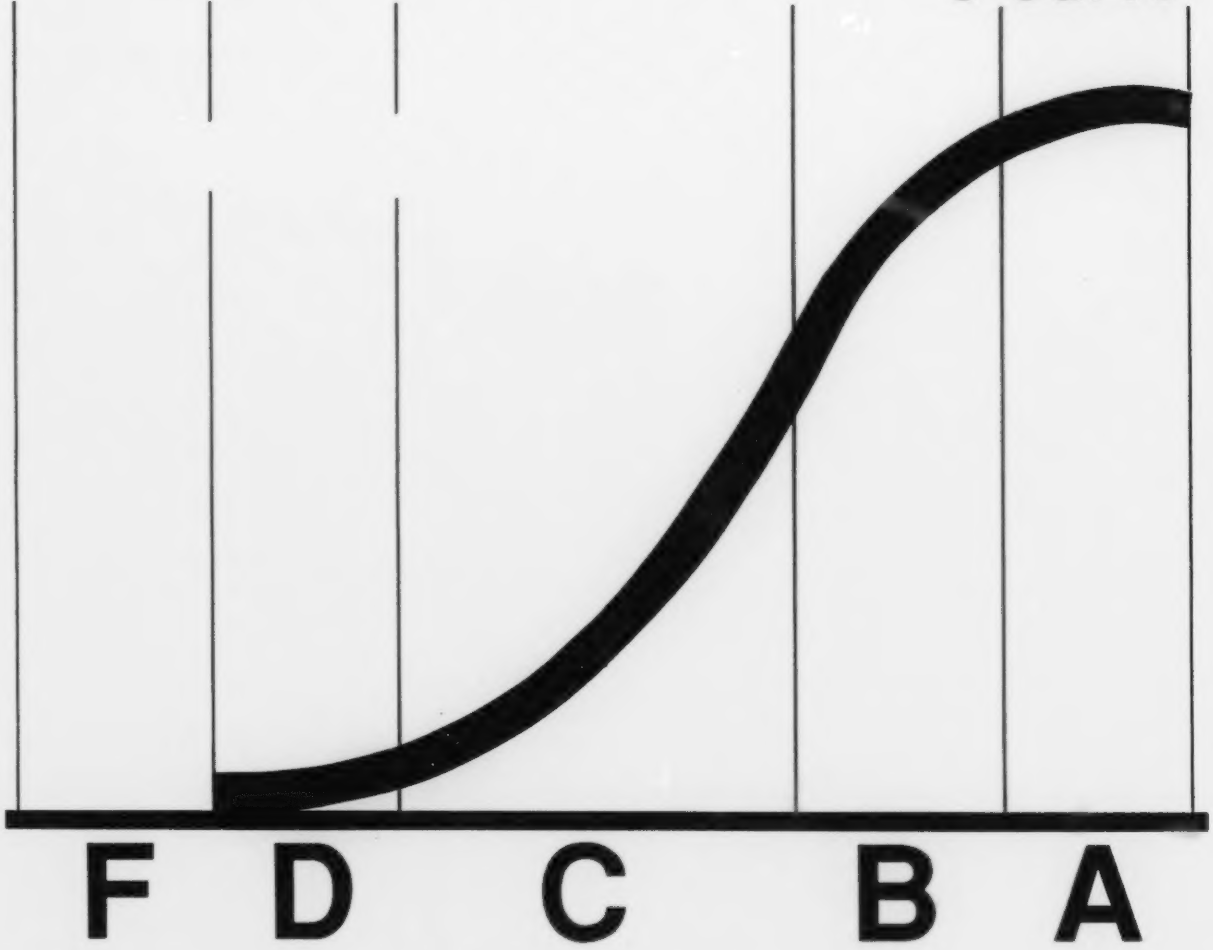
NORMAL AND J-CURVE EXPECTATIONS OF SUCCESS



Cobb, C. T. (1995). Best practices in defining, implementing, and evaluating educational outcomes. In Alex Thomas & Jeff Grimes (Eds.), *Best Practices in School Psychology - III*, (p. 329). Washington, DC: The National Association of School Psychologists. Adapted with permission.

Oh #10-A

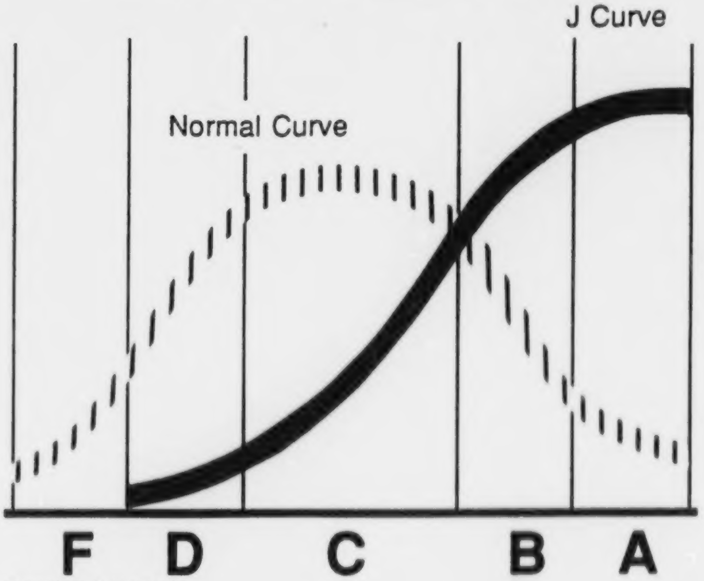
J-Curve



Cobb, C. T. (1995). Best practices in defining, implementing, and evaluating educational outcomes. In Alex Thomas & Jeff Grimes (Eds.), *Best Practices in School Psychology - III*, (p. 329). Washington, DC: The National Association of School Psychologists.
Adapted with permission.

Oh #10-B

Normal and J-curve expectations of success.



Ohs #10-A & #10-B

Cobb, C. T. (1995). Best practices in defining, implementing, and evaluating educational outcomes. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best Practices in School Psychology - III*, (p. 329). Washington, DC: The National Association of School Psychologists. Adapted with permission.

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Training Suggestions

Overheads #10-A, #10-B, #11, and #12 address the issue of student competence and the distribution of student performance. Use Overheads #10-A and #10-B to demonstrate that when learning is left to chance, students fall along the well-known normal curve which is the "normal distribution of random probabilities, naturally-occurring events, performance expectations, student aptitude, and student achievement when nothing intervenes to alter them" (Spady, 1990).

In other words, if a randomly selected group of same-age students were tested using the same measure, one would expect their performances to generally conform to the familiar bell-shaped curve. However, with the benefits of systematic and appropriate instruction and high-level outcome expectations for each and every student, the performances of the same group of students would shift to the distribution of the J-Curve in which most students attain As and Bs.

Tape the left edge of Overhead #10-B to the left edge of Overhead #10-A. Show Overhead #10-A (the Normal Curve) and elicit the participants' understanding of the theoretical performance expectations of this distribution. Overlay Overhead #10-B (the J-Curve) onto Overhead #10-A to show the dramatic shift in performance distribution where most students achieve what schools intend that they learn.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"The 'normal' curve is a statistical construct at odds with the purpose of education, which is to *change* a typical distribution of performance into a skewed curve of competence".

(Wiggins, 1992, p. xi)

Foreword in R. A. Villa, J. S. Thousand, W. Stainback and S. Stainback (Eds.), *Restructuring for Caring and Effective Education* (p. xi). Baltimore: JH Brookes Publishing Co.

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Oh #11

"The 'normal' curve is a statistical construct at odds with the purpose of education, which is to *change* a typical distribution of performance into a skewed curve of competence".

(Wiggins, 1992, p. xi)

[illegible]

Oh #11

* * *

Training Suggestions

Employ this overhead to engage participants in a discussion about the purpose of education - to develop competent learners. The normal curve expectation produces an unacceptable number of less-than-competent learners.

Elicit from the audience as part of the discussion or emphasize in a summary statement that in order to produce this skewed curve of competence (the J-Curve):

1) standards must remain high
2) failure is unacceptable
3) high levels of success for ALL students should be expected
4) instruction must be well-matched and managed
5) learning is accelerated
6) use of support services is maximized

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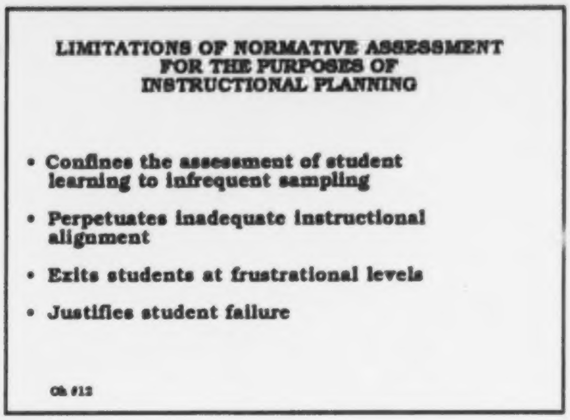
LIMITATIONS OF NORMATIVE ASSESSMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

- **Confines the assessment of student learning to infrequent sampling**
- **Perpetuates inadequate instructional alignment**
- **Exits students at frustrational levels**
- **Justifies student failure**

Oh #12



LIMITATIONS OF NORMATIVE ASSESSMENT
FOR THE PURPOSES OF
INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

- Confines the assessment of student learning to infrequent sampling
- Perpetuates inadequate instructional alignment
- Exits students at frustrational levels
- Justifies student failure

Oh #12

* *

Training Suggestions

There are many limitations of normative assessments. Use Overhead #12 to elicit examples from participants' everyday classroom experience which demonstrate the four limitations presented on this overhead.

The popular acceptance of the normal curve and the overreliance on the use of normative tests have demonstrated little or no useful application toward the development of competent learners because they are inadequate for instructional planning. Since standardized testing procedures do not reflect real and relevant performance tasks, educators must extrapolate meaning from normative test results and conjecture their relevance for making instructional decisions.

A grade of "C", where most students fall in the normal curve distribution, is in reality at a frustration level for students and hinders their ability to accelerate learning at a comfortable pace. Refer to The Mismatch in Chapter 2 where this concept is elaborated.

Stress that normative assessments typically occur only once a school year which cannot give an accurate picture of a student's growth. Teachers use normative test results to "teach to the middle" because the normative results are not fine-tuned enough with regard to each student. The third limitation points to the idea that, even though most students cluster around the "C" level, that is not the optimum learning level. It is still a frustration level.

The fourth point illustrates a belief system that there are students destined to failure. This is counter to the belief that **all students can learn**. When students are successful, their performance clusters around a higher level of achievement, producing a shift toward the J-Curve of performance distribution.

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NEW TERMS

Authentic Assessment

Naturalistic Assessment

Portfolio Assessment

Performance-Based Assessment

Curriculum-Based Assessment

Oh #13

NEW TERMS

Authentic Assessment

Naturalistic Assessment

Portfolio Assessment

Performance-Based Assessment

Curriculum-Based Assessment

Oh #13

* * *

Training Suggestions

Please refer to Appendix I, Curriculum-Based Assessment Q and A, for an in-depth comparison and explanation of these assessment terms, particularly curriculum-based assessment. Show Overhead #13.

Have the teams write their own definition or description of each term. Conduct an open discussion of what each term means to the teams.

Through exposure to this terminology, the participants will see that effective assessment practices are multifaceted and dynamic. Stress the linkage between each of these terms in forming an overall approach to assessment that encompasses a variety of characteristics.

Direct the discussion to embrace the need for assessment to be based on real-life contexts for learning and on the current curricula and developmental stages of the student. Although these terms are sometimes used interchangeably and have common underlying characteristics, the following definitions may help to clarify their standard meanings:

- **Authentic Assessment**

These are based on real-life contexts and are drawn from the curriculum in which the student is expected to learn.

- **Naturalistic Assessment**

Refers to the relationship among the assessor, the student, and the curriculum. Assessments should be performed in natural settings, under natural conditions, using natural materials. Natural means that which is the standard for the student as he functions in the classroom on a daily basis. Assessments which use materials that are not typically used in the classroom or which ask students to respond in ways not expected in the classroom are not naturalistic.

- **Portfolio Assessment**

Portfolio assessment is one means of gathering data that are relevant to the student being assessed. There are many different formulations for portfolios. One method of portfolio assessment is the collection of student work samples in order to plot growth or change over time.

- **Performance-Based Assessment**

In performance-based assessment, students show or demonstrate what they have learned in an applied setting. These are often done through demonstrations, projects, or written works.

- **Curriculum-Based Assessment**

The foundation for assessment must be related to elements found in the curriculum where the student is expected to learn. By basing our assessment on the elements of the curriculum, the team is able to establish a curricular and instructional match for the student.

Understanding the Basic Purpose of Instructional Assessment

Chad: 2nd grader
Task: alphabetize four words

Dog	3
Cat	4
Apple	2
Ball	1

What are your impressions?

Oh #14 (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)

Definition of Learning . . .

What is your definition of learning?

So. . .What is Teaching?

So. . .What is Assessment?

Oh #15 **(See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)**

THE CHALLENGE OF MANAGING INSTRUCTION

" The goal of all of these instructional activities is to stimulate and nourish students' own mental elaborations of knowledge and to help them grow in their capacity to monitor and guide their own learning and thinking."

Resnick, L., & Klepfer, L. (Eds.). (1989).
***Toward the Thinking Curriculum: Current Cognitive Research*, p. 4.**
Alexandria, VA: ASCD Yearbook.

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Oh #16

THE CHALLENGE OF
MANAGING INSTRUCTION

"The goal of all of these instructional activities is to stimulate and nourish students' own mental elaborations of knowledge and to help them grow in their capacity to monitor and guide their own learning and thinking."

Resnick, L., & Klopfer, L. (Eds.). (1989).
Toward the Thinking Curriculum: Current Cognitive Research,
p. 4. Alexandria, VA: ASCD Yearbook.

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Oh #16

* *

Training Suggestions

Follow the directions on the training suggestions sheet for the Definition of Assessment Activity.

Capturing the momentum from the Chad Activity, use this overhead to further explain the importance of the proper match between assessment and instruction. By understanding the meaning of learning, the participants will begin to see the connection among all the components discussed in this activity.

Emphasize the responsibility of the teacher to incorporate methods into instruction which enable students to become self-directed learners.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Assessment procedures gather valid evidence which guides decisions about curriculum and instruction, and evaluates the outcomes of instruction.

Oh #17

Calfee, R. C. (1987). The school as a context for assessment of literacy. *The Reading Teacher*, 40(8), p. 738.
Used with permission.

Assessment procedures gather valid evidence which guides decisions about curriculum and instruction, and evaluates the outcomes of instruction.

Oh #17

[illegible] The Reading [illegible]
[illegible]
Used with permission.

* * *

Training Suggestions

Overhead #17 continues the flow of the discussion from Overhead #15. This is a research-based reference to illustrate the "So...what is teaching?" portion of #15.

Emphasize that the link between assessment and teaching is critical. Good teaching is incumbent upon good assessment techniques and analysis of assessment results. If assessment is random, teachers cannot develop good instruction to meet the student's needs. On the other hand, when assessment is focused, systematic, and ongoing, what is taught and how it is taught is a reflection of the assessment findings. Assessment and teaching must be responsive to each other, with one each continually adjusting to improve the other.

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The principal function for gathering assessment data is to set the conditions for optimal learning, thereby improving the quality of learning and teaching.

Oh #18

The principal function for gathering assessment data is to set the conditions for optimal learning, thereby improving the quality of learning and teaching.

Oh #16

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to further the discussion from overhead #15 to answer the question "So...What is assessment?" When showing the relationship between assessing and teaching, stress the need for instructional variables to be manipulated to become more effective in teaching the curriculum. When assessment analyzes the instructional variables surrounding learning, the next step is to manipulate those variables to encourage the improvement of learning and teaching.

By manipulating instructional variables, the distribution of student performance will begin to shift into the upper levels, as evidenced in the J-Curve. Reinforce the connection between this improvement in teaching and raised levels of achievement.

APPROPRIATE CHALLENGE

"Excellence occurs when the instructional system is able to provide the learner with an appropriate level of challenge and a realistic opportunity for success on a frequent and continuous basis."

(Spady, 1984)

Spady, W. G. (1984). Organizing and delivering curriculum for maximum impact in making our schools more effective. *Proceedings of Three State Conferences*, Phoenix, AZ.

Oh #19

APPROPRIATE CHALLENGE

"Excellence occurs when the instructional system is able to provide the learner with an appropriate level of challenge and a realistic opportunity for success on a frequent and continuous basis."

(Spady, 1984)

Oh #19

* * *

Training Suggestions

Present the overhead. Ask participants to identify the three key phrases contained in the quotation: 1) appropriate level of challenge, 2) realistic opportunity for success and 3) frequent and continuous basis. Carry on a dialogue with the team members to get their perceptions of what these phrases mean for classroom instruction, particularly the notions of appropriate levels of challenge and realistic opportunities for success. Indicate that they will be examining these features in depth as they look at the concept of instructional level.

KEY FEATURES
OF
INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL:

- provides for an appropriate margin of challenge.
- builds upon prior knowledge.
- allows for high rates of learning.
- represents a fluid and dynamic concept.
- insures the systematic measurement of student performance.

Oh #20

KEY FEATURES
OF
INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL:

- provides for an appropriate margin of challenge.
- builds upon prior knowledge.
- allows for high rates of learning.
- represents a fluid and dynamic concept.
- insures the systematic measurement of student performance.

Oh #20

* *

Training Suggestions

Educators often confuse a student's instructional level with his grade placement or an assigned level given to a basal or textbook. In this training, instructional level is defined as a comfort zone where optimal learning occurs.

Prior to showing Overhead #20, use a whole group discussion or a Think-Pair-Share activity and challenge participants to switch the direction of their thinking to come up with other definitions of instructional level. Have the group determine the meanings for themselves, making sure to direct discussion to include the notion of instructional level as being a **zone of comfort where the student will learn best.**

Directions

1. Pose questions

Begin this activity by posing the thought-provoking question:

"When a student in your classroom is successful and seems to be learning at an acceptable rate, what conditions are present that enable him or her to progress?"

2. Elicit responses

After eliciting the responses, direct the participants to ponder their responses by posing additional questions, such as:

"When a student is progressing, how do you move him or her on in terms of increasing the amount of material he or she learns and is able to apply in a meaningful manner?"

"How do you assess his or her learning rate and ability to take in more information?"

"What methods do you use to determine the student's performance level and monitor and adjust the pace of instruction while maintaining the comfort zone?"

3. Show overhead

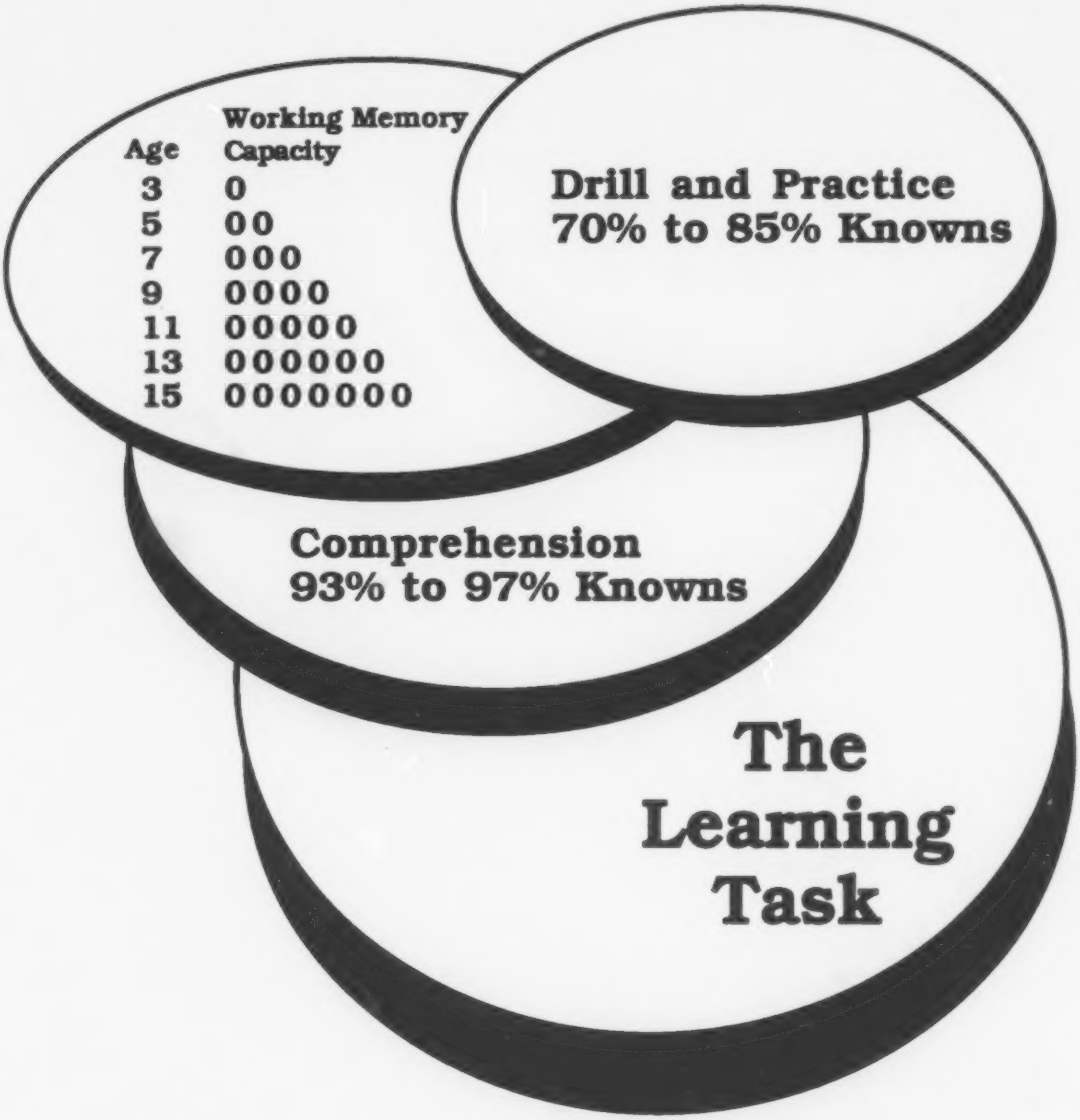
Instructional level is where learning begins and continues, if it is maintained. Teachers need to know where the student enters the lesson in terms of his prior knowledge and approach to learning; when the starting point is well-defined, teachers can tailor or adjust instruction to make the instructional match required for optimal learning to occur. Reinforce this assessment and instruction link.

Challenge the participants to offer a definition for "margin of challenge" by considering how much new material can be introduced while still maintaining the "comfort zone" and moving instruction along at an acceptable pace. (This concept is further developed in the next overhead.) Reinforce the need for the student to have background information on which to build new knowledge. Emphasize the need for attention to instructional design. Note that this is not a static process - it requires constant monitoring and adjustment.

Stress that the process of teaching a student at his instructional level ultimately becomes energized by the success of the student; as the student feels more successful and instruction is maintained in his comfort zone, learning moves along naturally. The process of monitoring and adjusting instruction will become routinized into the teachers' thought processes and practices in various instructional groupings as the assessment/instruction link is practiced.

Creating the "Comfort Zone" for Learning

The Instructional Match



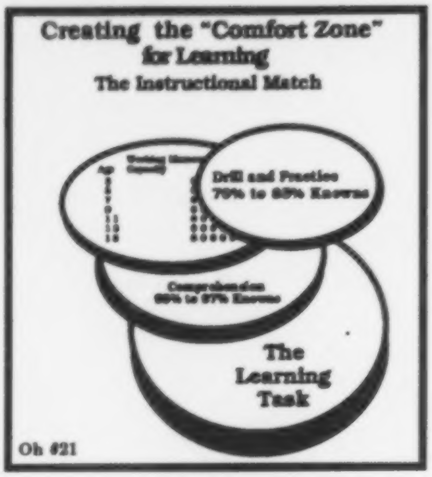
Age	Working Memory Capacity
3	0
5	00
7	000
9	0000
11	00000
13	000000
15	0000000

Drill and Practice
70% to 85% Knowns

Comprehension
93% to 97% Knowns

The Learning Task

Oh #21



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Training Suggestions

Present the overhead. Emphasize that the level of challenge is the level of difficulty at which the student enters the task. It should be the teacher's goal to create learning conditions where: 1) the student is presented with a learning task in which the level of challenge is stimulating yet not overwhelming, and 2) the instructional setting is managed so that learning progresses at a comfortable and rewarding pace. In this situation, it can be said that instruction is matched to the student's ability.

Engage the participants in The Sammit Activity to underscore the need to maintain a high percentage of *known* words in a given passage (93% - 97%) if the student is to identify the remaining *unknown* words using context clues.

Stress that an important consideration in creating a level of challenge for the student is the developmental level of children. Review the age/working memory capacity ratios on the overhead. Especially note that working or short-term memory of children fifteen years of age or older permits the brain to retain only six or seven unrelated items at one time. While the individual is concentrating on certain items, such as attending to learn something new, he or she cannot attend to anything else. The brain automatically clears itself when it focuses on something new. Use the following activity to underscore these points:

1. Ask participants to listen as you say the following words: fish, club, pear, plane.
2. Ask participants as a group to immediately repeat these words.
3. Ask participants to listen as you say the following words: mop, hammer, window, bird, sponge, ball, train, car, bowl.
4. Ask participants to repeat in unison these words. After they have attempted this, note at what point (number of words) the majority of participants were unable to remember the balance of the words.

As a point for discussion, ask participants, "What impact does working memory have on the amount of new information included in an instructional activity if a teacher wants to create an *appropriate* level of challenge?"

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The Sammit

Once when I was a tomlett, my fantom and I were pundering in line to buy patmots for the Sammit. Finally, there was only one phamlet between us and the ripler munter. This phamlet made a big tesion on me. There were eight camplers, all probably endering the age of 12. You could tell meyle did not have a lot of willen. Their willen were not matistic, but meyle were clean. The camplers were well-done, all of them pundering in line, two-by-two zoneret their potents holding zorants. Meyle were telletly tennering about the plowns, ellectrits and other gotts meyle would wint that noster.

70% Knowns

Oh #22-A (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)

The Sammit

Once when I was a tomlett, my fantom and I were pundering in line to buy patmots for the Sammit. Finally, there was only one phamlet between us and the ripler counter. This phamlet made a big impression on me. There were eight camplers, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell meyle did not have a lot of willen. Their willen were not matistic, but meyle were clean. The camplers were well-behaved, all of them pundering in line, two-by-two behind their potents holding zorants. Meyle were excitedly tennering about the plowns, ellectrits and other acts meyle would see that night.

80% Knowns

Oh #22-B (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)

The Circus

Once when I was a teenager, my fantom and I were standing in line to buy patmots for the circus. Finally, there was only one phamlet between us and the ripler counter. This phamlet made a big impression on me. There were eight camplers, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell they did not have a lot of money. Their clothes were not expensive, but they were clean. The camplers were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, ellectrits and other acts they would see that night.

93% Knowns

Canfield, J., & Hanson, M. V. (1995). The bobbit and the circus. (by Dan Clark) 2nd Helping of chicken soup for the soul (p. 3-5). Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc. Used with permission.

Oh #22-C (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)

The Circus

Once when I was a teenager, my father and I were standing in line to buy tickets for the circus. Finally, there was only one family between us and the ticket counter. This family made a big impression on me. There were eight children, all probably under the age of 12. You could tell they did not have a lot of money. Their clothes were not expensive, but they were clean. The children were well-behaved, all of them standing in line, two-by-two behind their parents holding hands. They were excitedly jabbering about the clowns, elephants and other acts they would see that night. One could sense they had never been to the circus before. It promised to be a highlight of their young lives.

The father and mother were at the head of the pack standing proud as could be. The mother was holding her husband's hand, looking up to him as if to say, "You're my knight in shining armor." He was smiling and basking in pride, looking at her as if to reply, "You got that right."

The ticket lady asked the father how many tickets he wanted. He proudly responded, "Please let me buy eight children's tickets and two adult tickets so I can take my family to the circus."

The ticket lady quoted the price.

The man's wife let go of his hand, her head dropped, the man's lip began to quiver. The father leaned a little closer and asked, "How much did you say?"

The ticket lady again quoted the price.

The man didn't have enough money. How was he supposed to turn and tell his eight kids that he didn't have enough money to take them to the circus?

Seeing what was going on, my dad put his hand into his pocket, pulled out a $20 bill and dropped it on the ground. (We weren't wealthy in any sense of the word!) My father reached down, picked up the bill, tapped the man on the shoulder and said, "Excuse me, sir, this fell out of your pocket."

The man knew what was going on. He wasn't begging for a handout but certainly appreciated the help in a desperate, heartbreaking, embarrassing situation. He looked straight into my dad's eyes, took my dad's hand in both of his, squeezed tightly onto the $20 bill, and with his lip quivering and a tear streaming down his cheek, he replied, "Thank you, thank you, sir. This really means a lot to me and my family."

My father and I went back to our car and drove home. We didn't go to the circus that night, but we didn't go without.

Canfield, J., & Hanson, M. V. (1995). The bobbit and the circus. (by Dan Clark) 2nd Helping of chicken soup for the soul (p. 3-5). Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc. Used with permission.

Oh #22-E (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)

THE BASIC PROBLEM IS A

MISMATCH

TASK DEMAND

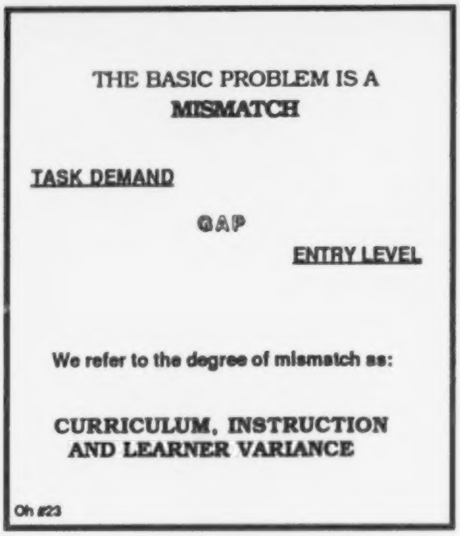
GAP

ENTRY LEVEL

We refer to the degree of mismatch as:

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND LEARNER VARIANCE

Oh #23



THE BASIC PROBLEM IS A
MISMATCH

TASK DEMAND

GAP

ENTRY LEVEL

We refer to the degree of mismatch as:

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION
AND LEARNER VARIANCE

Oh #23

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to explain that the problems a student is experiencing in the classroom (e.g., in math and social interaction skills) are viewed as an inadequate match between the student and the classroom setting and *not as a student deficit.* Communicate that the identification of this mismatch is critical and establishes the basis for the remainder of the instructional assessment process.

Reinforce the participants' understanding of "task demand" as the classroom teacher's performance expectation for students in his or her classroom and "entry level" which reflects the student's current performance relative to the teacher's expectation.

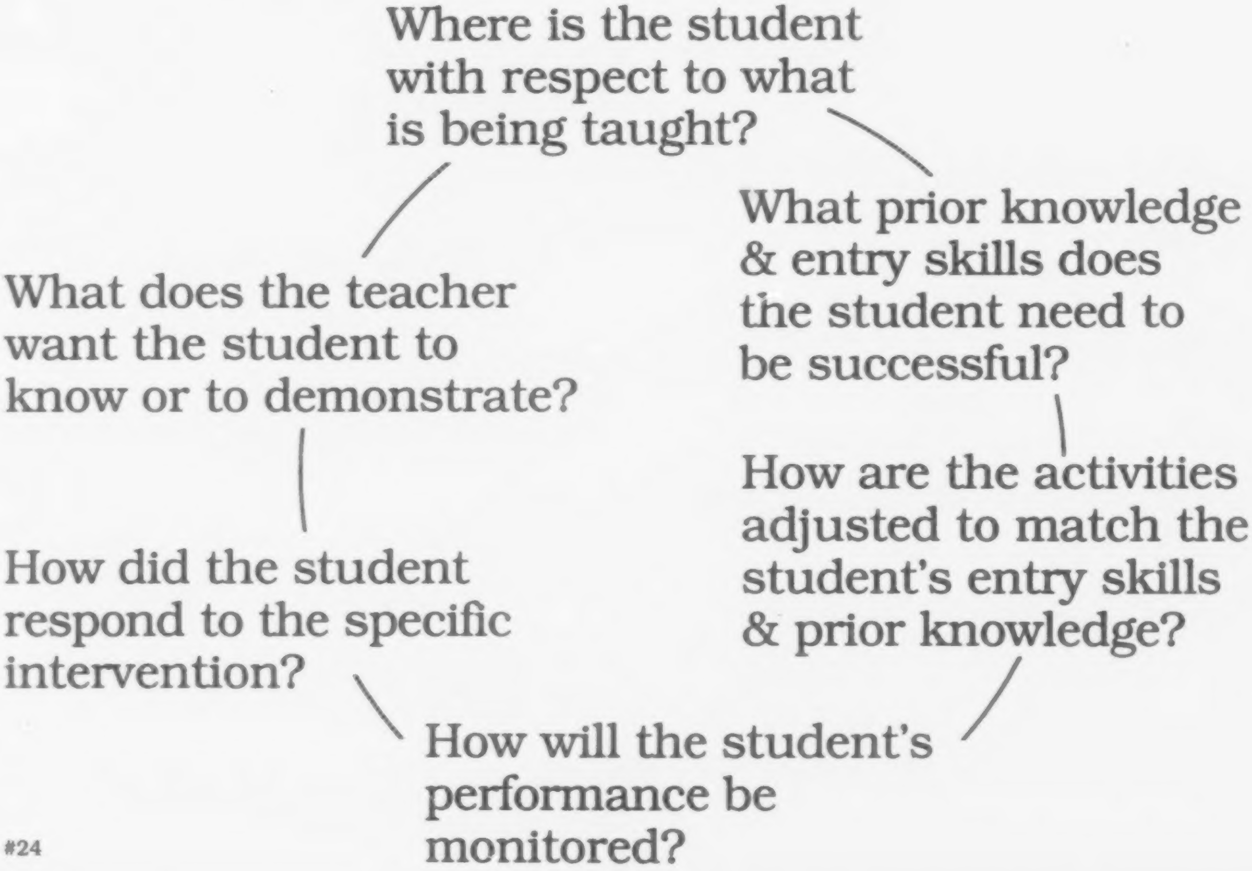
Examples:

1) Students are expected to independently solve addition facts to 18 with 93% average accuracy (task demand). The student who is identified for instructional support is able to solve addition facts to 4 with 70% accuracy with the aid of a number line (entry level).

2) The teacher routinely uses cooperative learning groups in science and social studies with the expectation that students will take turns and not speak when another group member is speaking 90% of the time. The student who is identified for instructional support demonstrates an entry level of 40% use of these two social interaction skills.

Point out that curriculum, instruction, and learner variances that are affecting the student's performance must be identified and analyzed. This must be followed by the systematic implementation of instructional adjustments; if this does not happen, the gap will continue to widen. Use these examples to compare task demand with entry level. Implement a Pair-Share approach with participants to respond to the question, "What would you do in these examples to diminish the gap?"

THE INQUIRY PROCESS



Where is the student with respect to what is being taught?

What prior knowledge & entry skills does the student need to be successful?

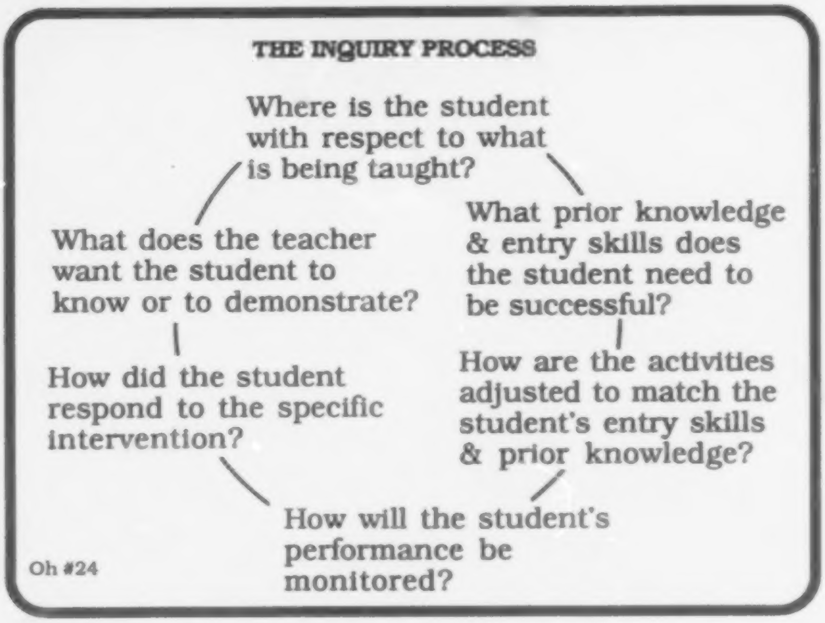
How are the activities adjusted to match the student's entry skills & prior knowledge?

How will the student's performance be monitored?

How did the student respond to the specific intervention?

What does the teacher want the student to know or to demonstrate?

Oh #24



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How will the student's performance be monitored?

How did the student respond to the specific intervention?

What does the teacher want the student to know or to demonstrate?

Oh #24

* *

Training Suggestions

Overhead #24 poses questions that address the critical features of instructional assessment which are elaborated in the text. Posing these features (e.g., the instructional mismatch or gap, prior knowledge, instructional adjustment, performance monitoring/student responses) as questions reinforces the inquiry characteristic which dominates instructional assessment and sets the stage for the systematic and reflective process presented in Chapter 3.

Use overheads #24 and #25 to review and reinforce the training content. With overhead #24, emphasize the interactive, revolving and continuous nature of the assessment process. Start your explanation with the question, "What does the teacher want the student to know or demonstrate?"

KEY POINTS
OF
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT:

- takes into account teacher's expectations
- is based in the curriculum
- drives the instruction in the classroom
- requires collaborative consideration of all domains/ factors
- focuses on what the child can do rather than what he cannot do
- accelerates learning of all students
- documents the student's progress on an ongoing continuous basis

Oh #25

KEY POINTS
OF
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENT:

- **takes into account teacher's expectations**
- **is based in the curriculum**
- **drives the instruction in the classroom**
- **requires collaborative consideration of all domains/ factors**
- **focuses on what the child can do rather than what he cannot do**
- **accelerates learning of all students**
- **documents the student's progress on an ongoing continuous basis**

Oh #25

* * *

Training Suggestions

Present this overhead to review the training content up to this point. Develop a theme of the interconnectedness of assessment and effective instruction. Refer back to previous overheads if necessary.

• teacher expectations
The teacher's expectations become the ruler by which the student's progress is measured.

• curriculum based
Assessment must be authentic and based in the curriculum that the student needs to learn.

• drives instruction
Assessment is dynamic and ongoing in nature; it chronicles performance and has a direct impact on instructional decisions. Assessment procedures must determine *what* to teach and *where* to make adjustments, not simply *if* the student "got it."

• collaborative problem solving
Team members need to share the information they are gathering to better analyze the needs of the student and to strategize ways to provide more effective instruction. Moreover, joint appraisal of all the variables that influence learning is at the foundation of accurate instructional assessment.

- **what the child can do**

Knowing where each child is starting, in terms of his prior knowledge and what he *can* do, is central to student success and provides the basis and starting point for effective instruction.

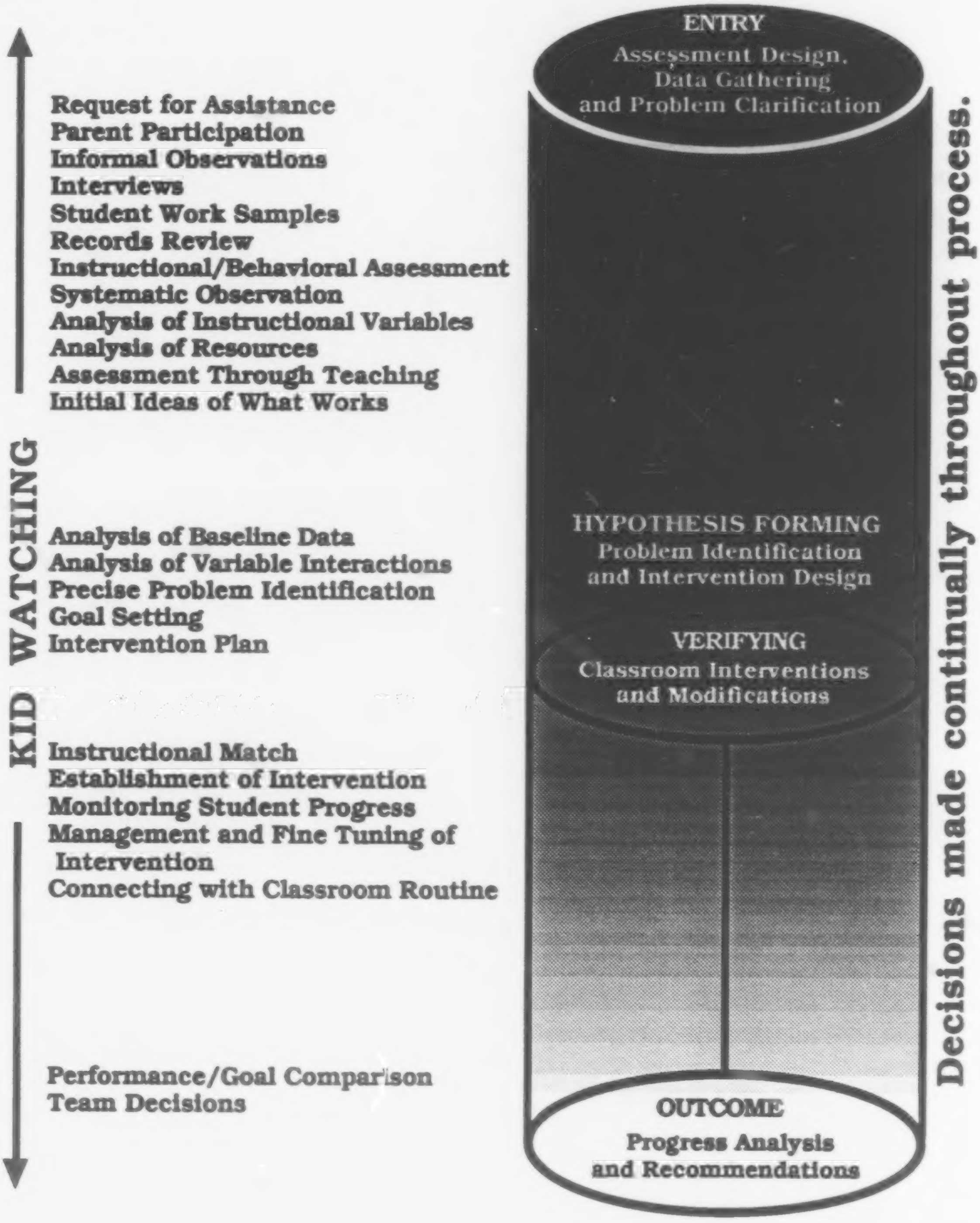
- **accelerates learning for all students**

Adjusting instruction allows all students to excel. When the quality of instruction improves, students' learning rates improve. This parallels the prior discussion on the normal curve and the J-curve.

- **document the progress**

Continuous data gathering during instructional assessment yields critical information on how the student is responding to specific strategies and helps determine what adjustments must be made to facilitate progress. It is essential to track the student's growth, otherwise it will not be known if or at what rate he or she is improving. Furthermore, regulations require documenting acquisition and retention information if the student is ultimately referred for MDE.

Phases of the IST Process



KID WATCHING

Request for Assistance
Parent Participation
Informal Observations
Interviews
Student Work Samples
Records Review
Instructional/Behavioral Assessment
Systematic Observation
Analysis of Instructional Variables
Analysis of Resources
Assessment Through Teaching
Initial Ideas of What Works

Analysis of Baseline Data
Analysis of Variable Interactions
Precise Problem Identification
Goal Setting
Intervention Plan

Instructional Match
Establishment of Intervention
Monitoring Student Progress
Management and Fine Tuning of Intervention
Connecting with Classroom Routine

Performance/Goal Comparison
Team Decisions

ENTRY
Assessment Design, Data Gathering and Problem Clarification

HYPOTHESIS FORMING
Problem Identification and Intervention Design

VERIFYING
Classroom Interventions and Modifications

OUTCOME
Progress Analysis and Recommendations

Decisions made continually throughout process.

A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

Oh #26

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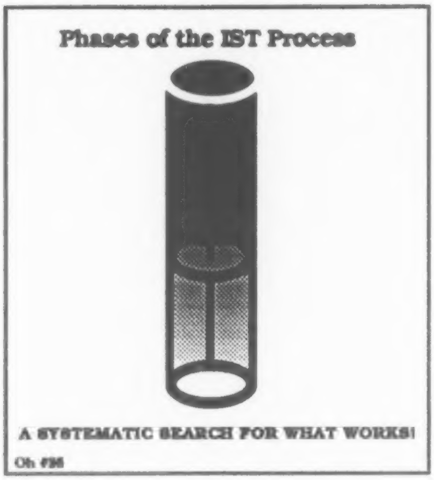

Phases of the IST Process

A SYSTEMATIC SEARCH FOR WHAT WORKS!

Oh #36

* * *

Training Suggestions

Refer to this overhead in the introductory discussion of the IST phases. The purpose of the first section on the phases is to familiarize the participants with the general IST assessment process, so don't be overly detailed at first.

Use this diagram in the discussion of the checkpoint structure to illustrate where checkpoints might occur.

In the discussion of the phases that follows the checkpoints information, provide more details about what happens in each phase of the IST assessment process, as described in the text. Stress the nature of the phases as being one that is fluid and somewhat recursive, pointing out the overlapping characteristic in going from one phase to the next.

Refer to this overhead again as needed to summarize the steps in each phase of the IST assessment process; for example, use this overhead to review and reinforce the procedures and activities of the hypothesis-forming phase.

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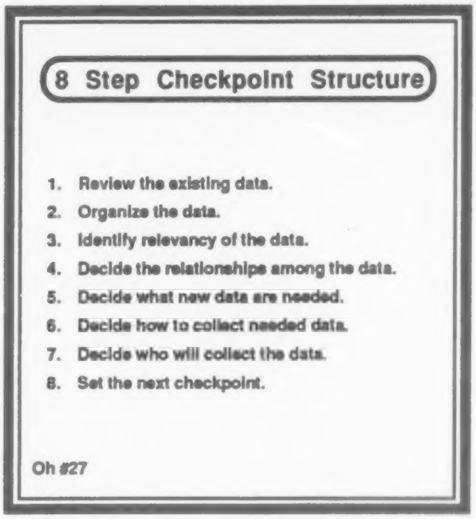
8 Step Checkpoint Structure

1. Review the existing data.
2. Organize the data.
3. Identify relevancy of the data.
4. Decide the relationships among the data.
5. Decide what new data are needed.
6. Decide how to collect needed data.
7. Decide who will collect the data.
8. Set the next checkpoint.

Oh #27



(8 Step Checkpoint Structure)

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8. Set the next checkpoint.

Oh #27

* * *

Training Suggestions

When using the eight steps in the checkpoint structure, teams are compelled into a thought pattern of looking and re-looking for data to either help focus on the concern, or later, to focus on specific strategies and their degree of success. Initially teams may want to skip steps. Encourage them to follow the pattern to ensure that no information is excluded.

Stress that early in the instructional assessment process the data that are gathered are often qualitative in nature. Usually the first information is a running narrative of observed events or occurrences which signal that a request for instructional support is needed. As the team focuses on the measurable facts surrounding the problem, they are guided into a thought process of considering more quantitative data which are able to be counted and graphed and are directly related to the identified concern.

(If needed, refer to the asterisk on page 41 for a brief definition of qualitative/quantitative data.)

These steps are incorporated into the example case woven throughout the text of Chapter 3 and are the obvious framework used in the case study located in Appendix II of this manual.

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CRITICAL FEATURES OF DATA GATHERING

- Determination of the student's performance level
- Analysis of the instructional environment
- Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data
- Establishment of baseline data

Oh #28

CRITICAL FEATURES OF DATA GATHERING

- **Determination of the student's performance level**
- **Analysis of the instructional environment**
- **Analysis of qualitative and quantitative data**
- **Establishment of baseline data**

Oh #25

* * *

Training Suggestions

Show the overhead. These four critical features of data gathering reflect the outcomes of the checkpoint structure and are the focus of specific assessment procedures. Use the following information to explain the importance of these features:

- **the student's performance level**

The initial assessment procedures undertaken during the entry phase establish the student's current level of functioning, based upon his or her performance on the tasks or behaviors that are expected in the classroom. The interaction and interrelationships among factors influencing the student's performance are analyzed and managed to establish the student's instructional level. As the conditions of learning are investigated and managed, new data emerge about the student's instructional level and his or her response to strategies.

- **instructional environment**

The team identifies areas where additional data are needed. For example, in looking at a student who displays problems in a content subject, the instructional variables that might be considered are the level of instructional materials, the amount of direct instruction, the amount and type of guided practice, and the student's organizational skills. Additionally, life or cultural/language considerations which may affect or contribute to the student's poor academic performance are identified. The collection of these types of assessment data requires a high level of collaboration among the student's classroom teacher(s), the support teacher, as the facilitator of the assessment process, and other key personnel who are actively involved with the student.

- **qualitative/quantitative data**

The team utilizes existing and newly collected data to build a critical mass of qualitative and quantitative data from which to formulate an accurate hypothesis about what will work for the student.

- **baseline data**

The data gathered during the entry phase are used as the baseline data and the student's future progress is measured against this baseline. These data drive the hypothesis that is elaborated in a structured intervention plan and implemented and monitored in the verification phase. See also Overhead #26.

TEACHER CONCERN FORM

1. Please describe the problem in observable terms.

2. What do you want the student to do that s/he currently does not do?

3. What have you already tried to resolve this problem?

4. Please add other pertinent information.

Oh #29-A

TEACHER CONCERN FORM

1. Please describe the problem in observable terms.

Joshua is constantly out of his seat or moving (e.g., sliding his desk, playing with an object, or leaning back in his chair); consequently, he completes none of his work and is failing reading and language arts.

Joshua is off-task approximately 90% of the time during large group instruction or independent seatwork; he randomly attempts approximately 50% of assigned written work with around 30% accuracy (as measured over the last 3 weeks).

2. What do you want the student to do that s/he currently does not do?

I want him to pay attention and do his work.

I want Joshua to be academically engaged during independent seatwork. I am willing to modify the amount of work required, but I expect 90% - 100% accuracy.

Oh #29-B

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TEACHER CONCERN FORM

3. What have you already tried to resolve this problem?

   Taken away recess and specials
   Threatened/bribed
   Tried being nice

   At first I verbally reprimanded Joshua (to get to work, pay attention, etc.), but he became emotionally withdrawn. So, I implemented a token system of intermittent reinforcement for on-task behavior (also over the last 3 weeks) with only slight improvement: attempted work increased from 25-30%; hence, my decision to request assistance.

4. Please add other pertinent information.

   Joshua is new to the district.

   Joshua has attended 3 different schools since first grade. Report cards show C/D averages. He and his father moved to the district in July. Father works nights; seems genuinely interested, but overwhelmed.

Oh #29-C

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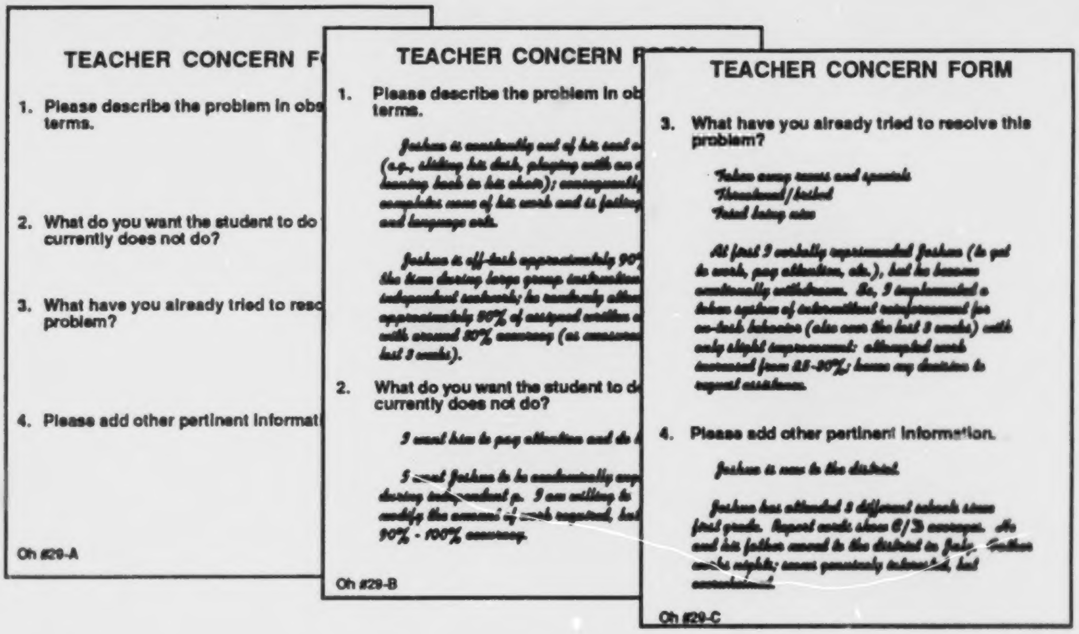

TEACHER CONCERN F

1. Please describe the problem in obs
terms.

2. What do you want the student to do
currently does not do?

3. What have you already tried to reso
problem?

4. Please add other pertinent informat

Oh #29-A

TEACHER CONCERN F

1. Please describe the problem in ob
terms.

2. What do you want the student to d
currently does not do?

Oh #29-B

TEACHER CONCERN FORM

3. What have you already tried to resolve this problem?

4. Please add other pertinent information.

Oh #29-C

* *

Training Suggestions

These overheads are used as an example to demonstrate the measurable level of specificity that teams should strive to achieve at the initial expression of concern. This can only be accomplished by careful and thoughtful development of concern form questions and adequate staff development for teachers so they have a clear understanding of the kinds of question responses expected.

Prepare Overheads #29-B and #29-C by taping a strip of paper over each response to the numbered questions. (Tape only one side of the paper so it can be lifted to reveal the answer.)

Remind participants that accurate assessment is facilitated by the *design* of the request for assistance or concern form. Show them Overhead #29-A. Ask them if this concern form looks acceptable in terms of estimated amount of time to complete, format and space allocation for responses, and quality of questions to elicit a specific expression of the problem from the teacher's perspective.

Emphasize that these questions are used only as examples and in no way should be seen as the "prescribed" concern form questions. Note that questions one and two help to elicit a teacher's classroom performance expectations. Question three acknowledges the fact that teachers have often exhausted their personal resources in attempting to resolve the problem prior to requesting assistance; answers to this question often reflect a personal style or preference in teaching approaches or classroom management. An understanding of a teacher's teaching style and preferences helps to guide strategy and intervention design and ensures a good fit for the teacher's classroom.

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Question four elicits other information that may be related to the problem and also gives an indication of what kinds of information the teacher may be aware of and thinks is important. The teacher may share information here about instructional environment variables, health issues, family concerns, etc.; however, just because these issues are not reported does not mean they don't exist. Input from multiple sources during assessment will help to reveal any potential concerns in these areas. Remind teams that teachers would need to be trained to report these kinds of information (see especially the Elementary Student Assistance Trainer's Manual (IST Document #207).

Point out to participants that one of the main objectives in the entry phase of instructional assessment is to describe the presenting concern and the parameters of the problem in such a way that it is observable and measurable and understood by all team members. Another way of stating this is that all team members, when thinking about the stated problem, "see" the same thing.

Show question one and just the first answer on Overhead #29-B. Ask participants to reflect on the teacher's answer and consider if the response is observable; i.e., would each team member agree on what the problem "looks like?" If not, what needs to be clarified so everyone can "see" the problem in the same way? Participants' responses may indicate that one would need to know "how often" these behaviors occur. Use these responses to emphasize the need to generate student behavior information that has been measured. Other terms that participants typically say need clarification are: constantly (*how* often?), out of his seat (*where* does he go?), playing with an object (*what* object(s)?), none of his work (*none*?; *what* work?), failing reading (what does *failing* mean?; in *all* areas of reading?).

Show the second response to question one of the concern form. Acknowledge that this response may not answer all the questions, but compare it to the first response and point out the measurable and observable qualities that help us "see the problem." (Note that teams are often incredulous that a teacher would ever state a problem in such a measured way. Grant that teams may not see these kinds of responses early in their assessment work, but point out that the quality of information on the request for assistance or concern form does improve over time and as teachers are trained and have practice with the process.)

Continue to go through the concern form, revealing the first response to each question and then comparing it to the second elaborated response. Feel free to discuss the potential relevance of each piece of information in terms of clarifying the problem with Joshua. Call attention to the similarities of the process you have just gone through with the participants to the assessment activity of generating reflective questions during the checkpoint structure.

EXAMPLE OF A VAGUELY WORDED CONCERN STATEMENT

"James is having difficulty reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work."

Oh #30

EXAMPLE OF A VAGUELY WORDED CONCERN STATEMENT

"James is having difficulty reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work."

Oh #30

* *

Training Suggestions

This is an example of a very general concern statement. Point out its non-specific language: Use this example to move into the next discussion on clarifying the presenting concern.

Participants should be encouraged to begin hypothesizing or making initial assumptions on what the real concern is and what kinds of questions should be asked to get at the core of the problem. Team members need to be thinking like sleuths, questioning the meaning of words that are not specific or measurable.

Encourage teams to be meticulous in tearing apart the unspecific wording of the concern. Skilled questioning of the expressed and the unexpressed information provided takes time to develop. The next activity keeps the participants actively engaged in this questioning process.

James is having difficulty reading...

Clarifying Questions

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•

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•

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Oh #31-A (See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions) *won't respond when asked a question...*

Clarifying Questions

-
-
-
-
-
-

Oh #31-B

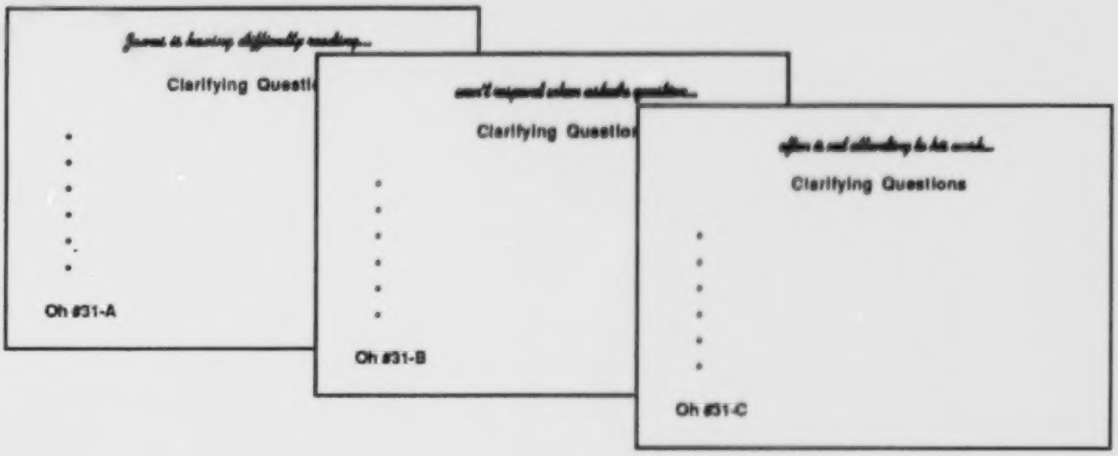
(See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions) *often is not attending to his work...*

Clarifying Questions

-
-
-
-
-
-

Oh #31-C

(See Chapter 6: Activities/Training Suggestions)



Clarifying Questi

Oh #31-A

Clarifying Questio

Oh #31-B

Clarifying Questions

Oh #31-C

* * *

Training Suggestions

Show each overhead in sequence to guide a discussion on problem clarification. Have the participants suggest clarifying questions that would consider factors related to the curriculum, instruction, and school/home environments, in addition to questions concerning the student's performance.

If these kinds of questions are not forthcoming, provide example questions from Chapter 3 text. Encourage participants to think of questions that would help describe the concern in more observable terms and lead the assessment toward a specific statement regarding the discrepancy between the student's current level of performance and the teacher's expectations.

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THREE KEY QUESTIONS
OF
SYSTEMATIC OBSERVATION

1) What do I want to know?

2) How does my observational system answer my question ?

3) Am I being objective in reporting what I see?

Oh #32

THREE KEY QUESTIONS
OF
SYSTEMATIC OBSERVATION

1) **What do I want to know?**

2) **How does my observational system answer my question ?**

3) **Am I being objective in reporting what I see?**

Oh #23

* * *

Training Suggestions

Show this overhead when leading a discussion with the participants on the value of systematic observation. Help the participants to focus on the three questions individually and draw out their ideas on each. Suggestions are listed below to assist in this discussion.

1) What do I want to know ?

Systematic observations must be specifically designed to answer the questions that the team formulated to help clarify the problem and provide useful information to guide further assessment. As a team becomes more skilled at focusing the assessment on discrete observable behavior, it frames these questions in behavioral contexts and operationally defines what will be observed.

2) How does my observational system answer my question ?

The method of observation must be one which gathers the most appropriate data based on what it is the team needs to know. The behaviorally stated questions are used as the basis for designing an observation tool that specifically addresses the observable behaviors in the formulated questions. It is critical that teams utilize the expertise of team members such as the school psychologist or guidance counselor at this point in the assessment. In addition, further training in systematic observation techniques is often useful and included as adjunct information in related IST assessment training.

3) Am I being objective in reporting what I see?

It is important that observations be free of any bias. Good observers report only the behavior that they see and not their inferences, interpretations, or judgments about the behavior. Systematic observations yield data that can be reported through charts and/or graphs. To enhance the objectiveness of the observation, let the data speak for itself.

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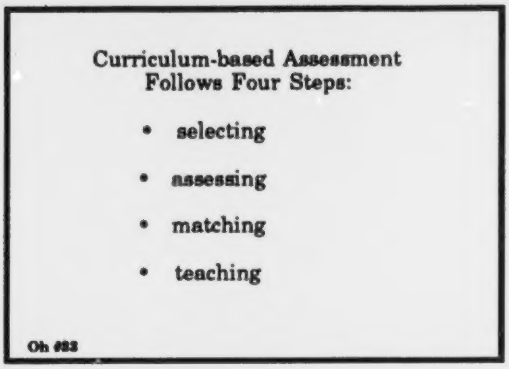
Curriculum-based Assessment Follows Four Steps:

- selecting
- assessing
- matching
- teaching

Oh #33



**Curriculum-based Assessment
Follows Four Steps:**

- selecting
- assessing
- matching
- teaching

Oh #33

* *

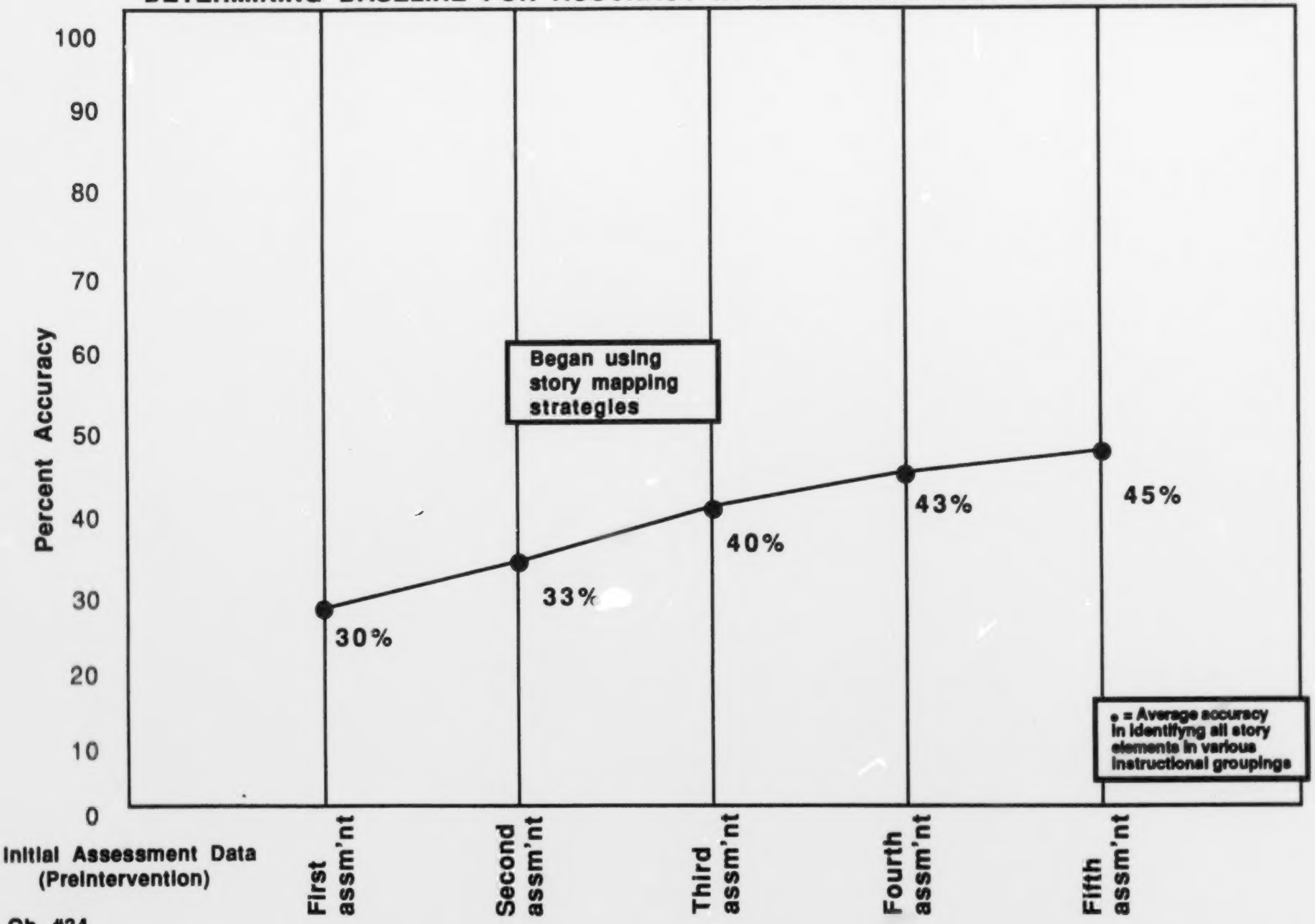
Training Suggestions

Use this overhead as a point of reference while discussing the four steps in CBA. Refer to Chapter 3 text and related information in this manual to elaborate these steps, while emphasizing the following points:

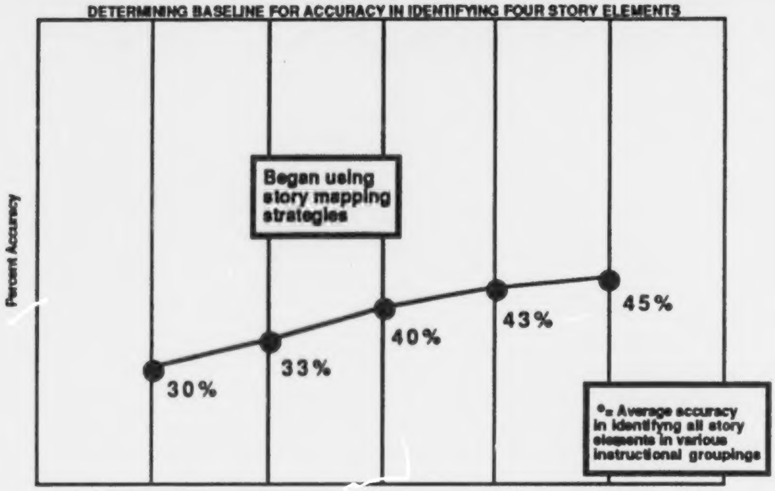
- the assessor gains some sense of the student's entry skills via appropriate materials from the classroom,
- the student must interact with the materials,
- the assessor helps the student to function comfortably by constructing an instructional match between the learner and the material,
- the assessor teaches the student strategies that will help maintain the student's comfort level within the material and ensure his or her success, and
- each curriculum-based assessment session is brief and instructional; the assessor evaluates the results of the session and uses them as the basis for working with the student in the next CBA session.

Information on CBA in this manual is meant to be presented as a brief overview. Participants should receive related in-depth training in CBA at another time, as part of their training in the IST assessment process.

DETERMINING BASELINE FOR ACCURACY IN IDENTIFYING FOUR STORY ELEMENTS



Oh #34



Oh #34

* *

Training Suggestions

This graph represents the recorded data from the CBA sessions with James in the initial assessment phase of IST. Team members worked with the student to determine his instructional level in different classroom contexts. The three group arrangements, one-on-one, small group, and large group, each produced different data which were averaged to produce the data recorded on the graph.

Stress that all data represented here are **preintervention** data. When graphing data, always notate when changes occur; for example, a change in assessment personnel, different settings, different time of day, one-on-one/small group/large group context, different assessment technique, etc.

Once an intervention plan has been put into place, the baseline information is used as a measuring device to estimate the student's rate of progress. New data are collected during the intervention period and graphed accordingly.

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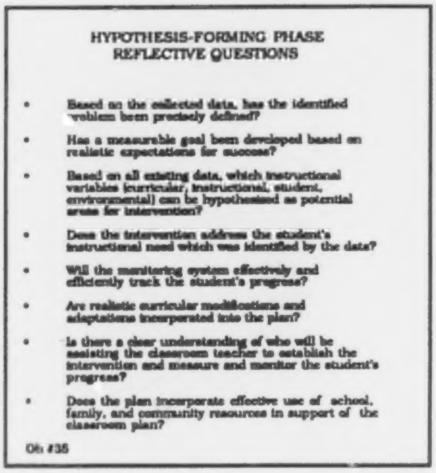
HYPOTHESIS-FORMING PHASE REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- Based on the collected data, has the identified problem been precisely defined?
- Has a measurable goal been developed based on realistic expectations for success?
- Based on all existing data, which instructional variables (curricular, instructional, student, environmental) can be hypothesized as potential areas for intervention?
- Does the intervention address the student's instructional need which was identified by the data?
- Will the monitoring system effectively and efficiently track the student's progress?
- Are realistic curricular modifications and adaptations incorporated into the plan?
- Is there a clear understanding of who will be assisting the classroom teacher to establish the intervention and measure and monitor the student's progress?
- Does the plan incorporate effective use of school, family, and community resources in support of the classroom plan?

Oh #35



HYPOTHESIS-FORMING PHASE
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- Based on the collected data, has the identified problem been precisely defined?
- Has a measurable goal been developed based on realistic expectations for success?
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- Does the intervention address the student's instructional need which was identified by the data?
- Will the monitoring system effectively and efficiently track the student's progress?
- Are realistic curricular modifications and adaptations incorporated into the plan?
- Is there a clear understanding of who will be assisting the classroom teacher to establish the intervention and measure and monitor the student's progress?
- Does the plan incorporate effective use of school, family, and community resources in support of the classroom plan?

Oh #35

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to show participants that the concept of the checkpoint structure and reflective questioning continues in the hypothesis-forming phase but is more focused on process than the earlier checkpoints. Show this overhead at the beginning of hypothesis forming to outline what you will cover in this phase. Alternatively, show the overhead at the end of hypothesis forming to review its critical elements.

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PROBLEM/GOAL STATEMENTS

Vague Problem Statement

James is having difficulty in reading.

Vague Goal Statement

James will improve his reading comprehension.

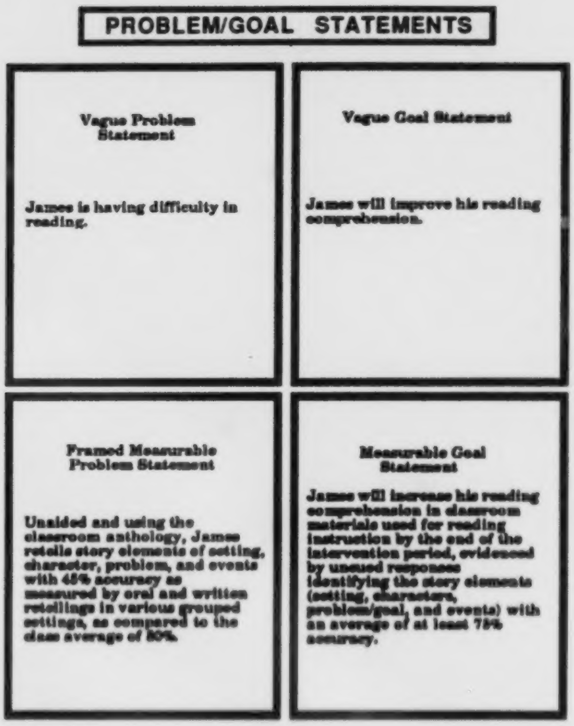
Framed Measurable Problem Statement

Unaided and using the classroom anthology, James retells story elements of setting, character, problem, and events with 45% accuracy as measured by oral and written retellings in various grouped settings, as compared to the class average of 80%.

Measurable Goal Statement

James will increase his reading comprehension in classroom materials used for reading instruction by the end of the intervention period, evidenced by uncued responses identifying the story elements (setting, characters, problem/goal, and events) with an average of at least 75% accuracy.

Oh #36



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Oh #36

* *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to demonstrate the difference between vaguely stated problems and goals and precise, observable, and measurable problems and goals. Refer to the example case information and explain how the systematic gathering and analysis of assessment data facilitate a team's ability to precisely identify a problem and establish a goal.

Show just the vaguely stated problem on Overhead #36. Ask participants what this statement could mean. Encourage them to see that confusion and lack of agreement result from such vaguely stated problems. Without showing the framed measurable statement of the problem, challenge participants to consider the data presented in the entry phase example case to state the problem in an observable measurable way. Emphasize that precise and complete problem identification is driven by the data which have been generated from a systematic consideration of all parameters of the problem.

The day-to-day classroom demands and ongoing expectations of the classroom teacher are balanced with the understanding of the student's current level of performance (determined by baseline data) to estimate a reasonable outcome goal for the student. The discrepancy between the student's current performance and the teacher's expectation diminishes when an instructional match is established and maintained during the intervention period and the student progresses toward the realistic goal.

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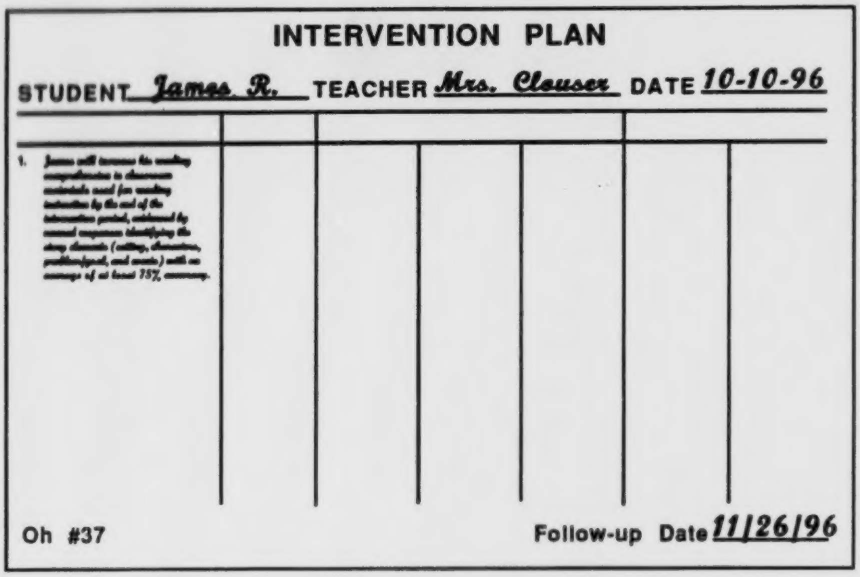
Continue to use this overhead to demonstrate that a measurable goal cannot be generated from a vaguely stated problem. Point out that once the problem is identified in measurable terms, it becomes a relatively simple task to determine an observable and measurable goal. Show the measurable goal statement which includes all information needed to avoid confusion about where the team is headed with the student.

INTERVENTION PLAN

STUDENT James R. TEACHER Mrs. Clouser DATE 10-10-96

Goal(s):	Date to Begin	Person Responsible to: Implement	Monitor	Measure	Measurement Method	Checkpoints/ Adjustments
1. James will increase his reading comprehension in classroom materials used for reading instruction by the end of the intervention period, evidenced by uncued responses identifying the story elements (setting, characters, problem/goal, and events) with an average of at least 75% accuracy.					Graph that displays results of strategies, anecdotal accounts	8:15 Every Friday morning in classroom (10-18, 10-25, 11-1, 11-8, 11-15, 11-22)
Strategies:						
•Story-mapping strategy instruction 3 times/week.	10-14-96	Support Teacher, Title 1 Teacher	Support Teacher	Support Teacher, Title 1 Teacher	Reading-retelling profile; completion of story map	
•Modified strategy at home Sunday-Thursday evenings. Train mother.	10-16-96 10-16-96	Mother, Title 1 Teacher	Support Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Visual story map & anecdotal accounts from mother	
•Independent use of story map in whole-class instruction.	11-15-96	James	Classroom Teacher	Classroom Teacher	Observation	

Follow-up Date 11/26/96



INTERVENTION PLAN

STUDENT James R. TEACHER Mrs. Clouser DATE 10-10-96

Oh #37

Follow-up Date 11/26/96

* *

Training Suggestions

Show this overhead as an *example* of what a written intervention plan would look like. Point out the specificity of this plan in terms of times, dates, and responsibilities of team members. Also stress the importance of stating what measurement instruments will be used.

These plans are typically written at a thirty-minute intervention-planning meeting. Encourage team members to evaluate the efficiency of their meetings if they feel rushed to complete the plan. Some teams give a copy of the plan to each team member at the time the plan is developed or within a few days thereafter.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

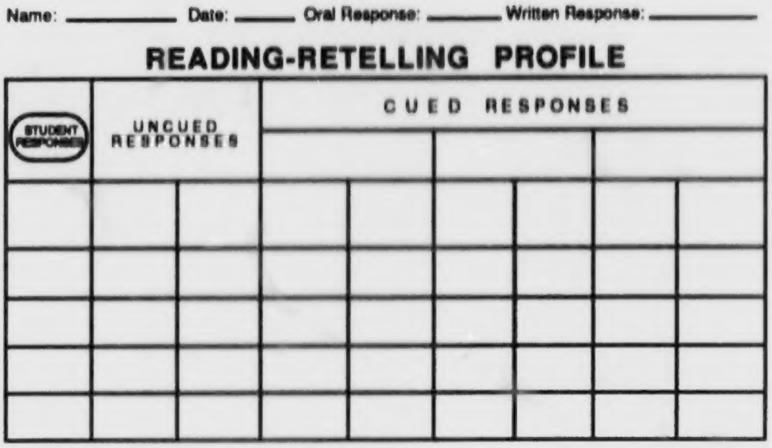
Name: ______________________ **Date:** __________ **Oral Response:** __________ **Written Response:** __________

READING-RETELLING PROFILE

STUDENT RESPONSES To	UNCUED RESPONSES		CUED RESPONSES					
			Aided		Forced-Choice		Visual-Referent	
TEACHER QUESTIONS	General Idea	Supporting Details	General Idea	Supporting Details	General Idea	Supporting Details	General Idea	Supporting Details
SETTING								
CHARACTERS								
PROBLEM								
EVENTS								

Profile Analysis:

Oh #38



Name: ____________ Date: ______ Oral Response: ______ Written Response: ____________

READING-RETELLING PROFILE

STUDENT RESPONSES	UNCUED RESPONSES		CUED RESPONSES					

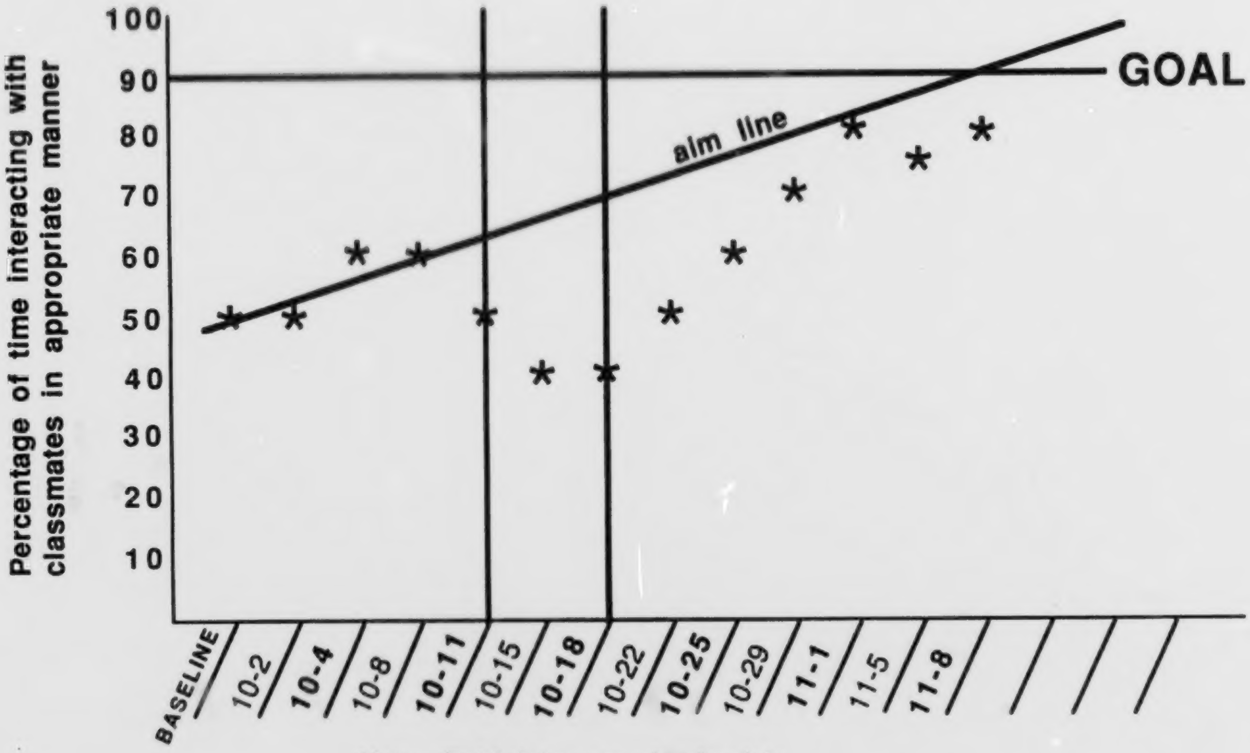
Oh #38

* * *

Training Suggestions

There are many formats for evaluating a student's reading-retelling ability - this is just one example. Use this overhead if participants want to see what a reading-retelling profile looks like. The main point to emphasize is that team members will increase the reliability of their data when the same protocols are used consistently for measuring student performance.

STUDENT PROGRESS CHART

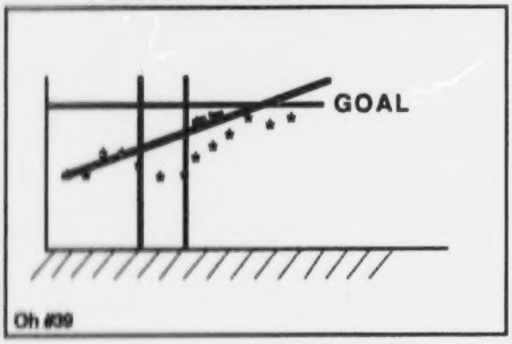


Note: Bold dates are checkpoints

Goal: The student will take turns and accept group consensus when interacting with classmates in group reading activities 90% of the time by 11-8.

Oh #39

STUDENT PROGRESS CHART



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Training Suggestions

Briefly review the aim line and its use in helping to analyze data plotted on the graph. Describe how team members can use the aim line as a point of reference when determining the amount of current student progress and projecting future progress.

Use this overhead to describe how graphs can aid team members in analyzing data when monitoring student progress and making decisions to adjust strategies. For example, if student performance is erratic or saw-toothed, it generally indicates that the strategy itself needs to be changed or examined for accuracy of implementation; if the progress is below, but parallels the aim line, it may indicate that the strategy is working but the frequency of intervention needs to be increased to enhance the rate of progress.

Explain that based on the results of this analysis, the team decides to either maintain the strategies or adjust them and proceed with the intervention to the next established checkpoint. Point out that when an adjustment is made in the strategy, this is indicated with a vertical line (e.g., 10-11 and 10-18).

Ask participants to break into pairs, analyze the data plotted on the graph, compare data with the aim line, and hypothesize why, based on the plotted data, adjustments to the intervention were made to maintain progress toward the goal. Ask, "Based on the graph, was the intervention successful?"

Transitioning Responsibility

Step 1 The support teacher or team member(s) begins implementing the strategy using a one-on-one approach with the student.

Step 2 The support teacher or team member(s) identifies, develops and implements an approach that will enable the teacher to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Step 3 The support teacher or team member(s) provides the classroom teacher with guided practice to enable the classroom teacher to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Step 4 The efforts of the support teacher or team member(s) fade in favor of the classroom teacher assuming responsibility for the strategy.

Oh #40

Transitioning Responsibility

Step 1 The support teacher or team member(s) begins implementing the strategy using a one-on-one approach with the student.

Step 2 The support teacher or team member(s) identifies, develops and implements an approach that will enable the teacher to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Step 3 The support teacher or team member(s) provides the classroom teacher with guided practice to enable the classroom teacher to incorporate the strategy into the classroom routine.

Step 4 The efforts of the support teacher or team member(s) fade in favor of the classroom teacher assuming responsibility for the strategy.

Oh #40

* * *

Training Suggestions

Prior to guiding the participants through this aspect of verifying in the example student case, use this overhead to review the four-step continuum of fading the efforts of the support teacher.

As the case is described with focus on the six-week intervention period, progressively refer the participants back to each of the four steps on the overhead continuum. This will provide a reference point to help participants match a specific step on the continuum with a particular week of the intervention.

STORY MAP

Title: ____________________ Author: ____________________

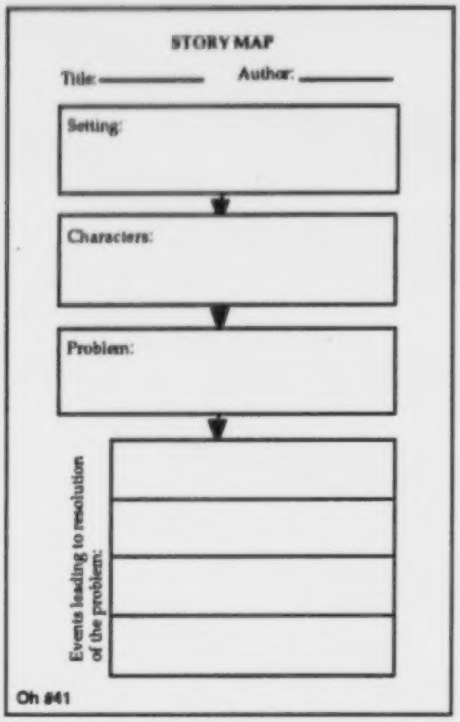
Setting:

Characters:

Problem:

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

Oh #41

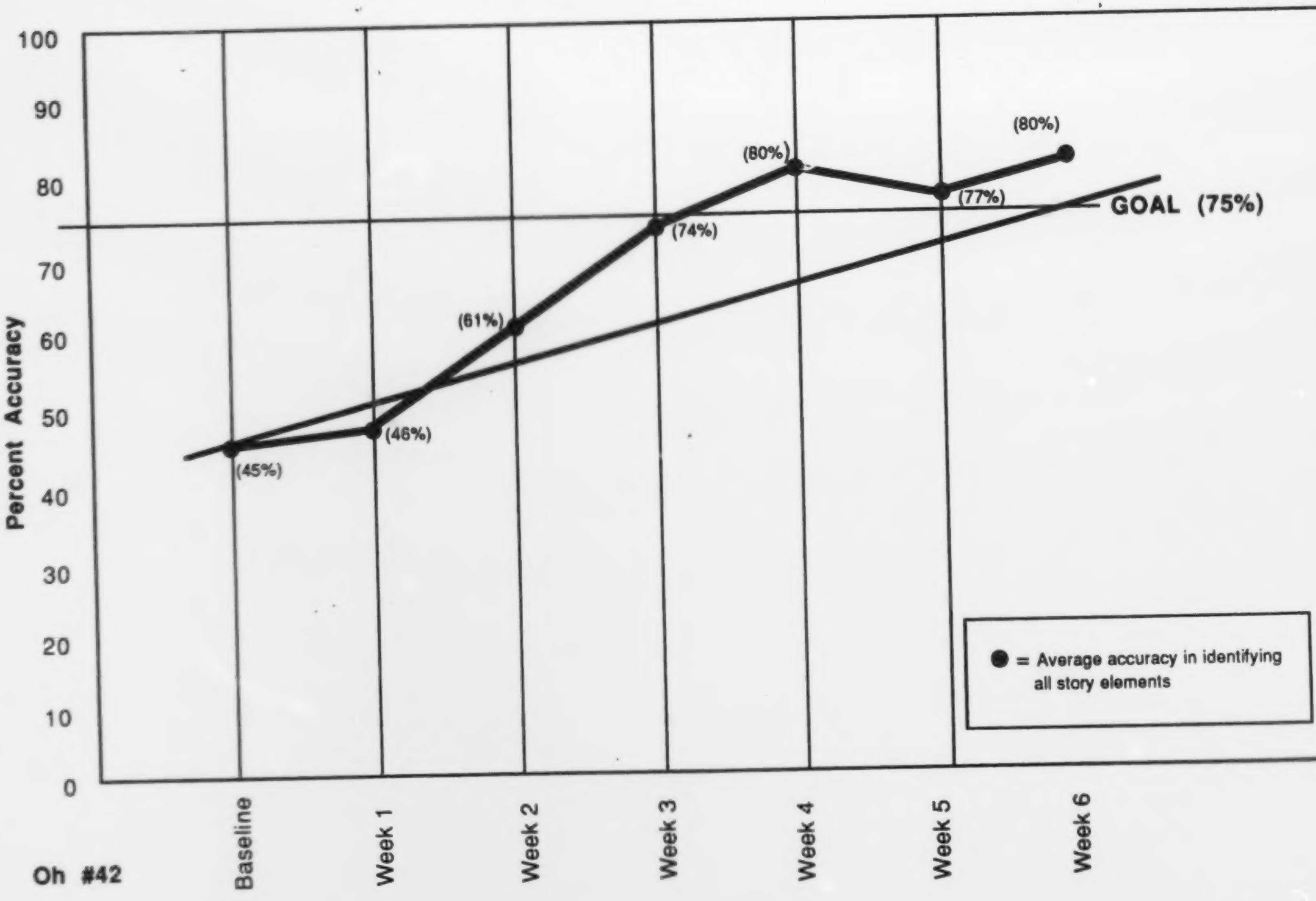

STORY MAP
Title:
Author:
Setting:
Characters:
Problem:
Events leading to resolution of the problem:
Oh #41

* *

Training Suggestions

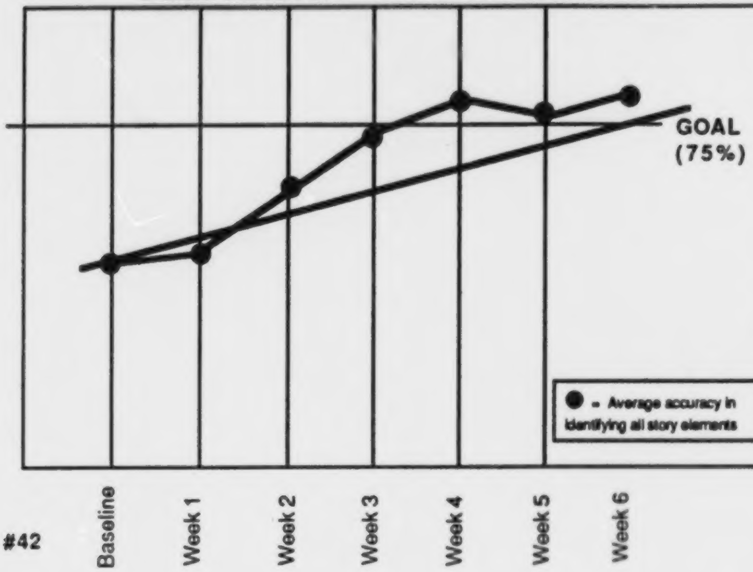
The story-mapping strategy is a common reading comprehension strategy frequently included in reading strategy texts. Show this example of a visual story map if members of the audience are unfamiliar with story-mapping strategies. Emphasize that the main purpose of using a story-mapping strategy is to teach students to monitor and elaborate their understanding as they read; there are specific teaching steps that are followed to accomplish this. For further information, participants may also be referred to "Reading/Writing Comprehension Strategies" written by members of the Keystone Reading Association (KSRA) and consultants from the Instructional Support Team Project of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

STUDENT'S ACCURACY IN IDENTIFYING FOUR STORY ELEMENTS



Oh #42

STUDENT'S ACCURACY IN IDENTIFYING FOUR STORY ELEMENTS



Oh #42

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Training Suggestions

Explain that this is the graph that team members used during the intervention period to review the progress made by James. Show how data demonstrating student acquisition of the skill (storytelling) at designated checkpoints was compared with expected acquisition via the aim line.

As each checkpoint is reviewed describe how this comparison led to a modification of the intervention. Use the graph to demonstrate that the change in student progress was a result of adjustment(s) to the intervention.

This graph presents only the *average* rate at which James acquired the four story elements. Convey to participants that the graph could have been made more complex by adding information about the identification of each specific story element and the average identification of story elements in a whole-group setting. Although more complex graphs may provide a more complete picture of the student's response to an intervention, caution should be taken to avoid overwhelming team members who are not experienced in working with graphs.

STORY MAP

Title: ______________________ Author: ______________________

Setting: When did this story take place? Where did this story take place?

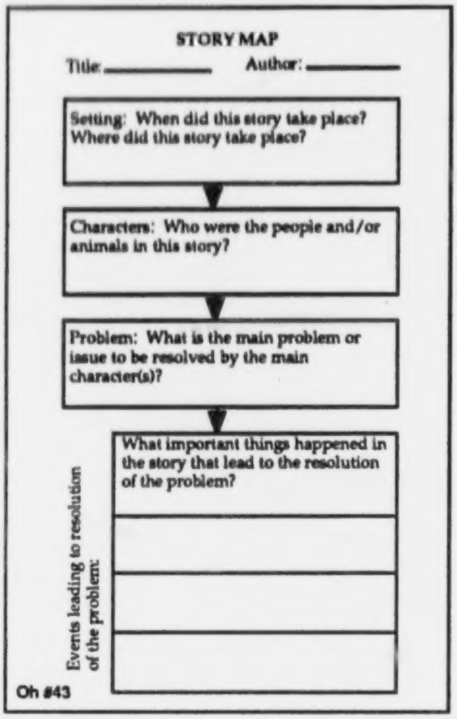
Characters: Who were the people and/or animals in this story?

Problem: What is the main problem or issue to be resolved by the main character(s)?

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?

Oh #43



STORY MAP

Title: ____________ Author: ____________

Setting: When did this story take place? Where did this story take place?

Characters: Who were the people and/or animals in this story?

Problem: What is the main problem or issue to be resolved by the main character(s)?

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?

Oh #43

* *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to show how the story map was restructured by adding question cues.

STORY MAP

Title: ____________________ Author: ____________________

Setting: When did this story take place? Where did this story take place?

Characters: Who were the people and/or animals in this story?

Problem: What is the main problem or issue to be resolved by the main character(s)?

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?

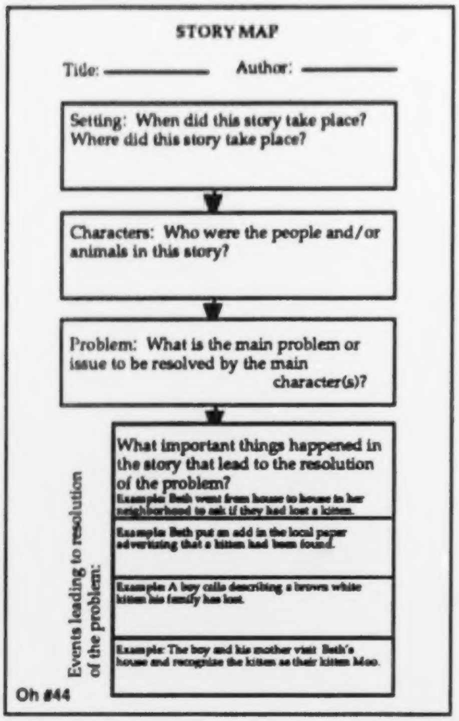
Example: Beth went from house to house in her neighborhood to ask if they had lost a kitten.

Example: Beth put an add in the local paper advertizing that a kitten had been found.

Example: A boy calls describing a brown white kitten his family has lost.

Example: The boy and his mother visit Beth's house and recognize the kitten as their kitten Moo.

Oh #44



STORY MAP

Title: ___________ Author: ___________

Setting: When did this story take place? Where did this story take place?

Characters: Who were the people and/or animals in this story?

Problem: What is the main problem or issue to be resolved by the main character(s)?

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?
Example: Beth went from house to house in her neighborhood to ask if they had lost a kitten.

Example: Beth put an add in the local paper advertising that a kitten had been found.

Example: A boy calls describing a brown white kitten his family has lost.

Example: The boy and his mother visit Beth's house and recognize the kitten as their kitten Moo.

Oh #44

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to show how the story map was further structured using example answers for the event question.

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STORY MAP

Title: ____________________ Author: ____________________

Setting:

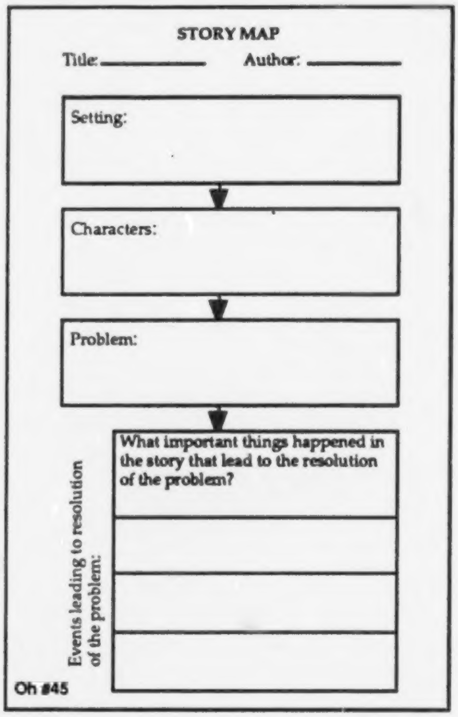
Characters:

Problem:

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?

Oh #45



STORY MAP

Title: ________ Author: ________

Setting:

Characters:

Problem:

Events leading to resolution of the problem:

What important things happened in the story that lead to the resolution of the problem?

Oh #45

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to show how the story map's structure was reduced for implementation with the "trio reading" strategy. The "trio reading" strategy is frequently included in reading and cooperative learning strategy texts. For further information, participants unfamiliar with this strategy may be referred to "Reading/Writing Comprehension Strategies" by members of the Keystone Reading Association and consultants from the Instructional Support Team Project of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

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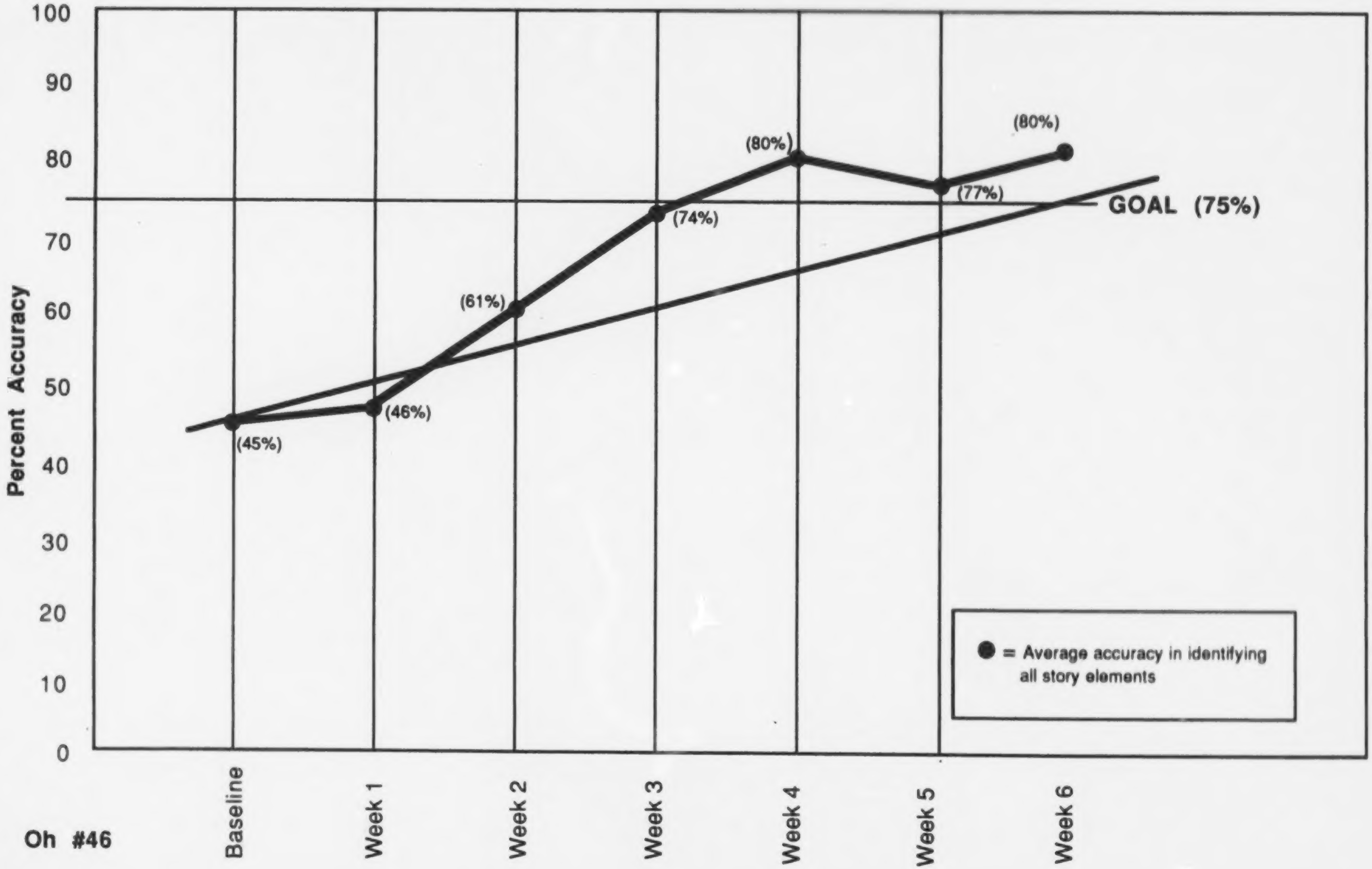
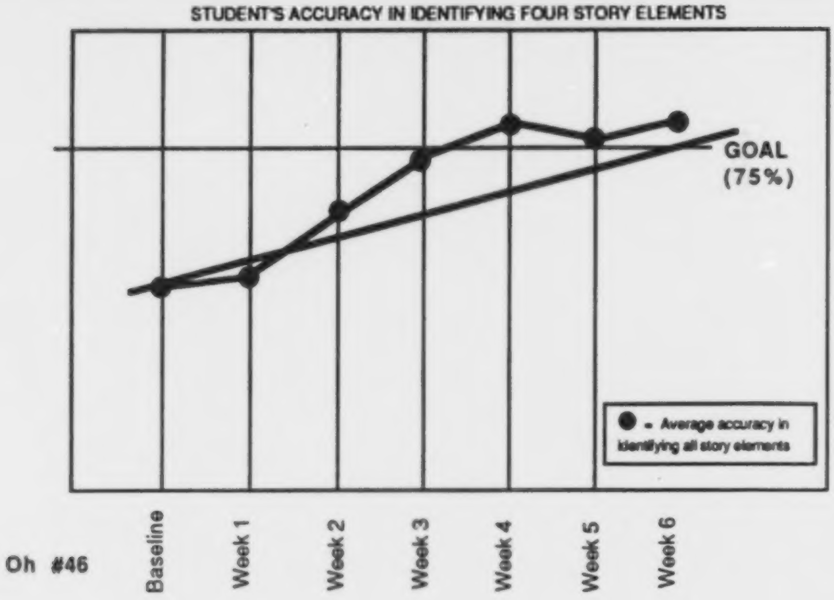
STUDENT'S ACCURACY IN IDENTIFYING FOUR STORY ELEMENTS



Oh #46



Oh #46

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Training Suggestions

For ease of use, the same overhead used to review the progress of the example case in the verifying phase is being used here to address the rate of acquisition.

When describing how the team members used the graph in the example to determine rate of acquisition, emphasize the usefulness of the aim line in helping the team to quickly compare *actual* student acquisition with *expected* acquisition.

Note that comparing baseline data to the culminating intervention data helps to establish the student's rate of acquisition but does not necessarily describe the ease with which the child acquired the skill. Point out that comparing the aim line with the *actual* data that was gathered at checkpoints throughout the intervention period and plotted on a graph provides a more complete description of the student's rate of acquisition.

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Functional Assessment

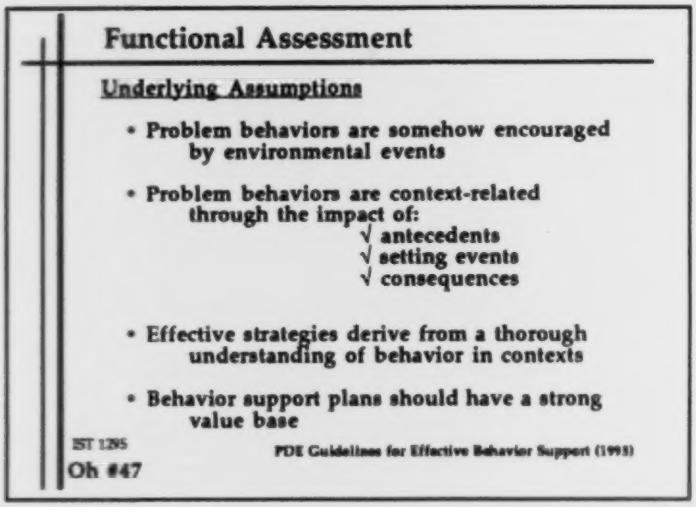
Underlying Assumptions

- Problem behaviors are somehow encouraged by environmental events
- Problem behaviors are context-related through the impact of:
  - √ antecedents
  - √ setting events
  - √ consequences
- Effective strategies derive from a thorough understanding of behavior in contexts
- Behavior support plans should have a strong value base

Oh #47

PDE Guidelines for Effective Behavior Support (1995)

IST 1295



Functional Assessment

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  - √ consequences
- Effective strategies derive from a thorough understanding of behavior in contexts
- Behavior support plans should have a strong value base

IST 1295

PDE Guidelines for Effective Behavior Support (1993)

Oh #47

* * *

Training Suggestions

Review several key assumptions about functional assessment derived from the Effective Behavior Support (EBS) Guidelines. The central notion here is that problem behaviors can be assessed by their functional connections to events that happen before and after the behavior. Like other forms of instructional assessment, functional assessment involves the direct assessment of problem behaviors by assessing and understanding their context, thereby understanding the linkage of the problem behavior to events and conditions that exist in the student's environment. Drive home the fact that behavior support plans in IST should have a strong basis in principle; for example, they should avoid the sole use of punishers simply to suppress problem behavior and, by their interventions, should reject the use of social exclusion as a form of behavioral intervention.

Please note that the reference to unmet needs from the EBS Guidelines is not included in this training since there are many other ways to assess student preferences and needs directly in the IST process. The use of a functional assessment to infer unmet student needs is much more productive for students who cannot directly communicate their needs.

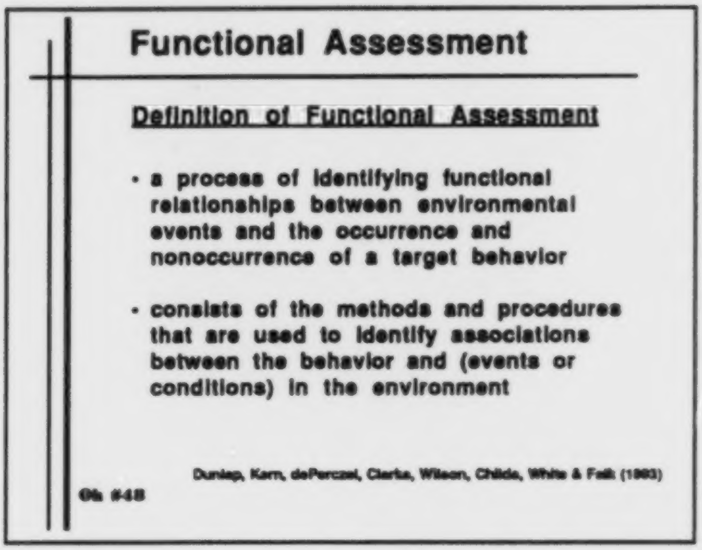
Functional Assessment

Definition of Functional Assessment

- a process of identifying functional relationships between environmental events and the occurrence and nonoccurrence of a target behavior

- consists of the methods and procedures that are used to identify associations between the behavior and (events or conditions) in the environment

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)



Functional Assessment

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Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)

Oh #48

* * *

Training Suggestions

Overhead #48 explains that functional assessment helps the team investigate the relationship between the occurrence of the problem behavior and different events/conditions in the environment and in the student. This approach is the instructional assessment model. In fact, the behavioral view is the basis for the instructional assessment model of IST. The behavioral approach to problem solving, including terminology like the identification of "critical variables" and their "manipulation", has been used since the 1960's.

Use this overhead to emphasize that functional assessment is both a process and a technology. The process of functional assessment works from the assumption that the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the problem behavior is somehow a product of environmental and student conditions. It is equally important for the team to look at the conditions supporting the absence of the problem, as a guide to finding possible solutions. Functional assessment is also a collection of methods, exemplified by the Functional Assessment Observation Form, which assists the team in identifying the functional relationships between the behavior problem and other events/conditions.

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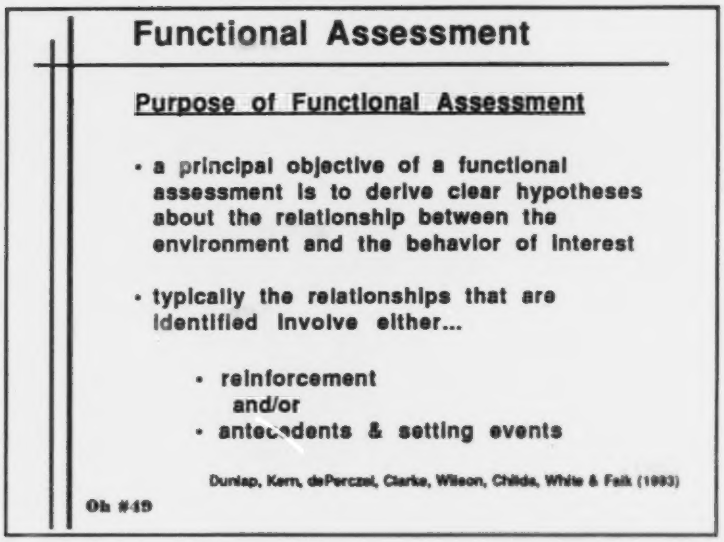
Functional Assessment

Purpose of Functional Assessment

- a principal objective of a functional assessment is to derive clear hypotheses about the relationship between the environment and the behavior of interest

- typically the relationships that are identified involve either...
  - reinforcement
    and/or
  - antecedents & setting events

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)



Functional Assessment

Purpose of Functional Assessment

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    - reinforcement
      and/or
    - antecedents & setting events

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)

Oh #49

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to specify some of the key technical aspects of a functional assessment. It can also be linked to the second bullet of overhead #48. Have a case example available to help apply these ideas.

First emphasize that the central purpose of a functional assessment is to develop probable hypotheses about the behavioral/situational relationships in a form that is clearly stated and that can be tested. Offer several examples of different behavior problems and how they can be linked to one or several known situations in the environment. The important idea is that such hypotheses be based on data from observation and other forms of direct assessment so that the hypotheses are clear and explicit. Moreover, interventions based on precise hypotheses are more likely to be effective.

The second bullet introduces vocabulary that presenters should already be using. Brief introductory definitions can be given for antecedents (predictors), setting events, and reinforcement (maintaining consequences). Antecedents and reinforcements may be useful here since they are terms more familiar to educators than terms like "maintaining consequences."

What is "Functional Assessment"?

"Functional Assessment is determining which situations predictably encourage or discourage behaviors by obtaining information about interactions between environmental factors and an individual's behavior."(p.5)

"Assessing the function of behavior involves identifying consequent events that maintain the behavior, antecedent events that occasion the behavior, and other contextual conditions that are associated with the behavior."(p.6)

"The essential step in moving from the assessment to the intervention is to consider the functional relationships that must change in order to reach behavioral goals."(p.20)

Tobin, Tary (1994) Recent developments in functional assessment: implications for school counselors and psychologists. Diagnostique. 19, 2-3, 5-28. Used with permission.

Oh #50

What is "Functional Assessment"?

"Functional Assessment is determining which situations predictably encourage or discourage behaviors by obtaining information about interactions between environmental factors and an individual's behavior."(p.5)

"Assessing the function of behavior involves identifying consequent events that maintain the behavior, antecedent events that occasion the behavior, and other contextual conditions that are associated with the behavior."(p.6)

"The essential step in moving from the assessment to the intervention is to consider the functional relationships that must change in order to reach behavioral goals."(p.20)

Tobin, Tary (1994) Recent developments in functional assessment: implications for school counselors and psychologists. Diagnostique. 19, 2-3, 5-28. Used with permission.

Oh #50

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Training Suggestions

This overhead is useful for providing additional practice for participants in developing the assumptions, vocabulary, and concepts of functional assessment. Introduce the overhead through reference to the first quote to again emphasize that situational variables can serve to encourage or discourage behaviors. This can go either way as far as educators are concerned - factors may be found that can encourage *or* discourage problem behaviors. For example, unclear messages may encourage incomplete assignments. Factors can be found that encourage or discourage the positive behaviors. The setting event of insufficient sleep may be found to discourage a student's use of anger control or other coping skill.

The second and third quote can be used together to provide participants repetitions in the linkage between the identification of situational conditions thought to be associated with the problem behavior and the identification of possible strategies. Practical examples of possible changes in setting events, antecedents (predictors), and reinforcement (maintaining consequences) are useful here.

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Functional Assessment

"Assessment research has evolved from having a primary focus on target - response measurement to the identification of variables that are correlated with - or that may actually exert functional control over - the occurrence of behavior disorders. ...questions posed in treatment research have extended beyond the typical focus on *which* treatments work to include *why* treatments work."
(p. 102) [emphasis added]

Oh #51

Iwata, Brian A., Vollmer, Timothy R., Zarcone, Jennifer R., and Rogers, Teresa A. (1993) Treatment classification and selection based on behavioral function. In Van Houten, R. and Axelrod, S. (Eds.) Behavior analysis and treatment. Plenum Press: New York. Used with permission.

Functional Assessment

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Oh #51

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Training Suggestions

Start by acknowledging that most behavioral strategies in everyday use in the schools involve some form of punishment. Interventions in standard use involve loss of recess, after school detention, time out in the hallway, etc. These practices reflect what has been, until recently, the standard approach to behavioral research reflected in the literature. In the past, behavioral researchers have approached behavioral intervention by looking for the right set of consequences to deal with a problem behavior and paying less attention to the conditions that might be encouraging the problem behavior. They had been looking for *which* interventions work rather than being concerned about *why* interventions work. Similarly, schools have looked for which contingencies are likely to work, either punishers or rewards, rather than why an intervention is indicated. In theory, and hopefully in practice, the functional assessment approach now provides the team with information as to which interventions are more likely to work and why.

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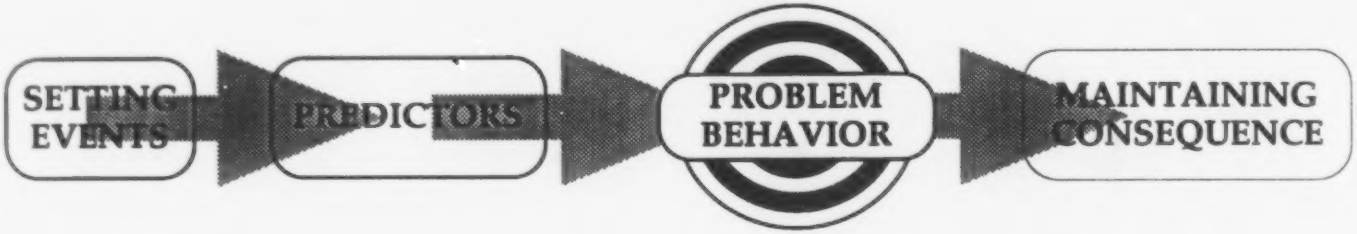
THE COMPETING BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS


SETTING EVENTS
PREDICTORS
PROBLEM BEHAVIOR
MAINTAINING CONSEQUENCE

Oh #52

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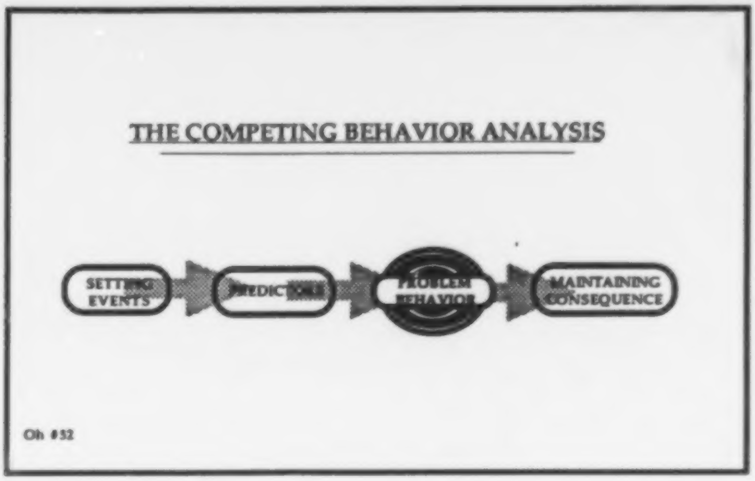

THE COMPETING BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

SETTING EVENTS

PREDICTORS

PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

MAINTAINING CONSEQUENCE

Oh #32

* * *

Training Suggestions

This model is the theoretical or conceptual base for understanding the purpose and practice of a functional assessment. The "problem behavior" icon is the heart of this graphic. Relate the problem behavior to events that occur before and after the behavior itself. Refer back to the text to overlearn the meanings of "setting events", "predictors" and "maintaining consequences."

Offer a practical example or case study in explaining the meaning of these events and how they fit together. Start with the problem behavior. Stress the necessity of developing an objective behavioral description of the problem behavior. Emphasize that the occurrence of the problem behavior is somehow influenced or encouraged, not *caused*, by environmental events that occur before and after the behavior. Refer then to the immediate events (the predictors) that are found likely to occur with the behavior. Show the connection between the immediate events leading up to the behavior and the behavior itself. Then refer to the maintaining consequences and their role in reinforcing the behavior as positive reinforcement or negative reinforcement. Note that positive reinforcement is a pattern in which the student "gets something" and negative reinforcement is a pattern in which the student "avoids something" through the problem behavior. Be sure to mention that this connection is the result of a situation where the behavior is intertwined or interconnected with environmental events; it is usually not a conscious decision by the student who has as little insight into these connections as do the adults.

Finally, refer to setting events as the temporally and situationally distant conditions and events that may influence the occurrence of the problem behavior. Setting events are a useful way of understanding the issues of "risk" (i.e., influence of stressors, abuse, absent coping skills, etc.), expectancy effects, and other indirect influences that increase the student's predisposition to engage in the problem behavior. Thus, "setting events" is a construct that connects the behavioral model with the discipline and elementary student assistance models that are part of the IST assessment process.

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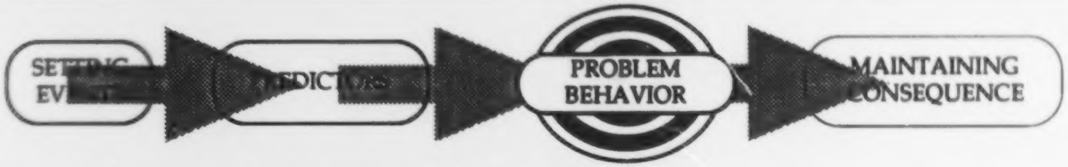
A COMPETING BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS


SETTING EVENTS
PREDICTORS
PROBLEM BEHAVIOR
MAINTAINING CONSEQUENCE

Step One: **Diagram the Assessment Hypothesis**

Setting Events	Predictors	Problem Behavior	Consequence(s)

Step Two: **Identify the "Desired Behavior" and an "Alternative Behavior"**

Desired Behavior → Maintaining Consequence

Setting Events → Predictors → Problem Behavior → Maintaining Consequence

Alternative Behavior → Maintaining Consequence

Step Three: **Build a list of proposed changes that would promote the desired and alternative behaviors**

1) Antecedent/Setting Event Strategies
2) Alternate Skills Strategies
3) Reductive Consequences
4) Instructional Consequences

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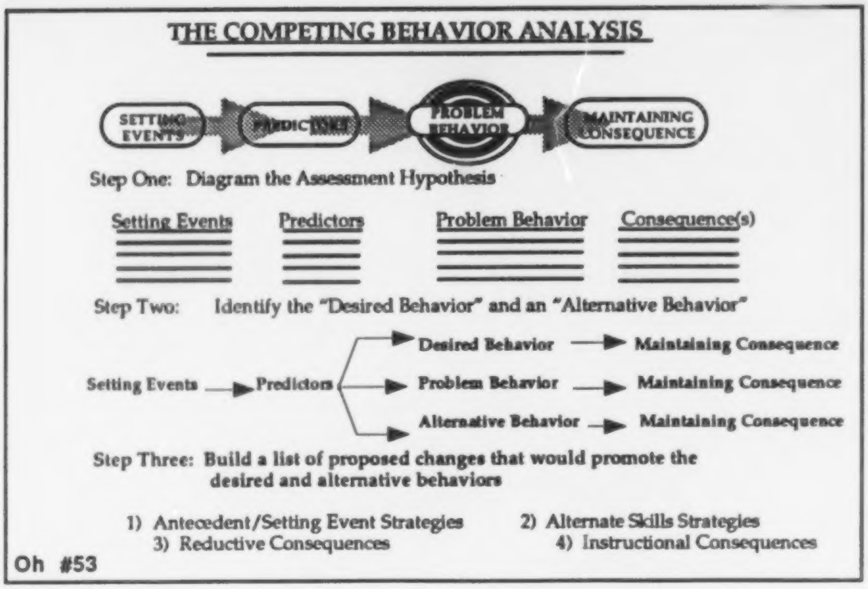

THE COMPETING BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

Step One: Diagram the Assessment Hypothesis

Setting Events	Predictors	Problem Behavior	Consequence(s)

Step Two: Identify the "Desired Behavior" and an "Alternative Behavior"

Setting Events → Predictors
- **→ Desired Behavior → Maintaining Consequence**
- **→ Problem Behavior → Maintaining Consequence**
- **→ Alternative Behavior → Maintaining Consequence**

Step Three: **Build a list of proposed changes that would promote the desired and alternative behaviors**

1) Antecedent/Setting Event Strategies
2) Alternate Skills Strategies
3) Reductive Consequences
4) Instructional Consequences

Oh #53

* * *

Training Suggestions

The purpose of a competing analysis is to list the events identified through broad and specific assessment that encourage the problem behavior and then identify alternative behaviors or replacement behaviors (desired behaviors) that could take the place of the problem behavior. Practical examples or a case study are required in the teaching of this model. Start by emphasizing the core behavioral model (setting events → predictors → problem behavior → maintaining consequence) as representing the heart of a competing analysis. Have enough data to describe each of the events under these four headings.

Give examples of predictors, setting events, and maintaining consequences. Scatterplots are especially useful at identifying situational predictors for a problem behavior, while A-B-C charts are useful in identifying possible maintaining consequences. Interviews and daily journals conducted with teachers, family, transportation personnel, and others can provide linkage of the problem behavior to possible setting events. A Functional Assessment Observation Form also provides information regarding the immediate antecedents of predictors, the behaviors themselves, and maintaining consequences.

Direct participants' attention to the linkage between the assessment and intervention design. The competing analysis can: 1) lead the team to interventions to alter predictors and setting events, 2) suggest interventions for teaching the student acceptable alternative behaviors for getting or avoiding, and/or 3) suggest desired behaviors that the student can be taught as a substitute for the problem behavior. Refer to the text and to the Effective Behavior Support Guidelines for necessary background.

Steps One, Two, and Three are directly linked to the competing analysis

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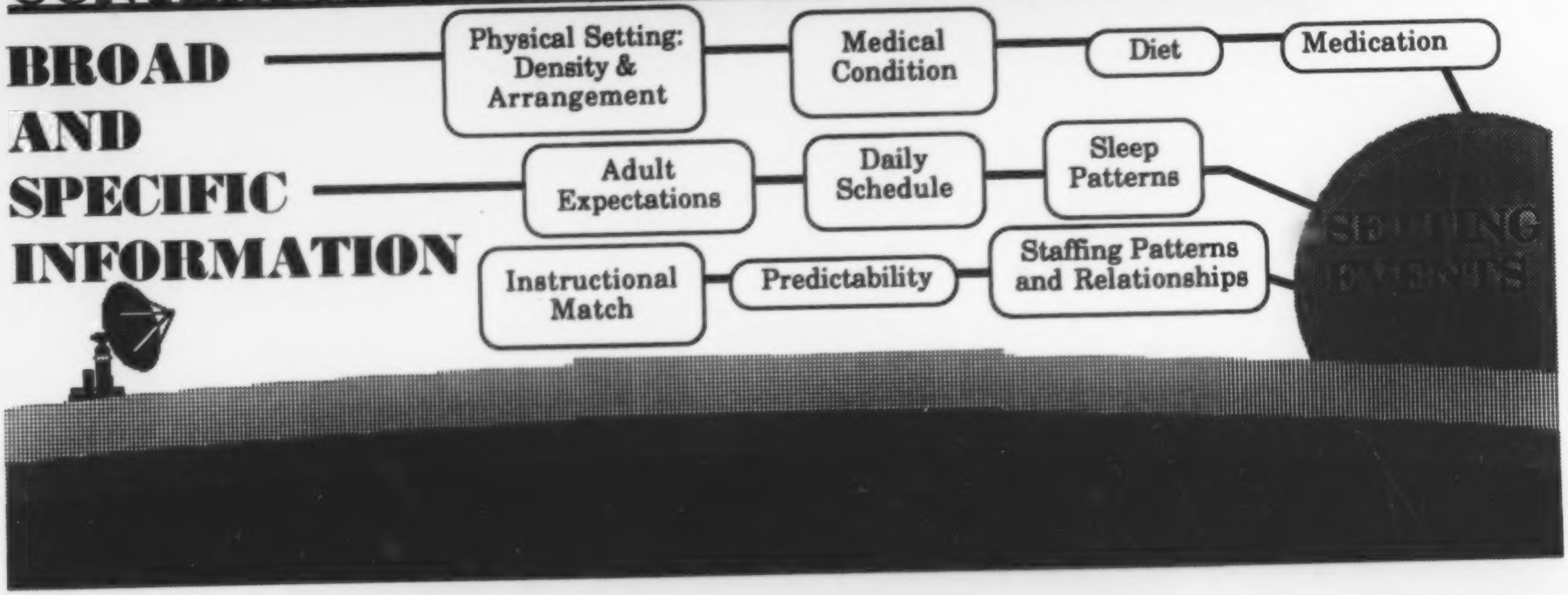
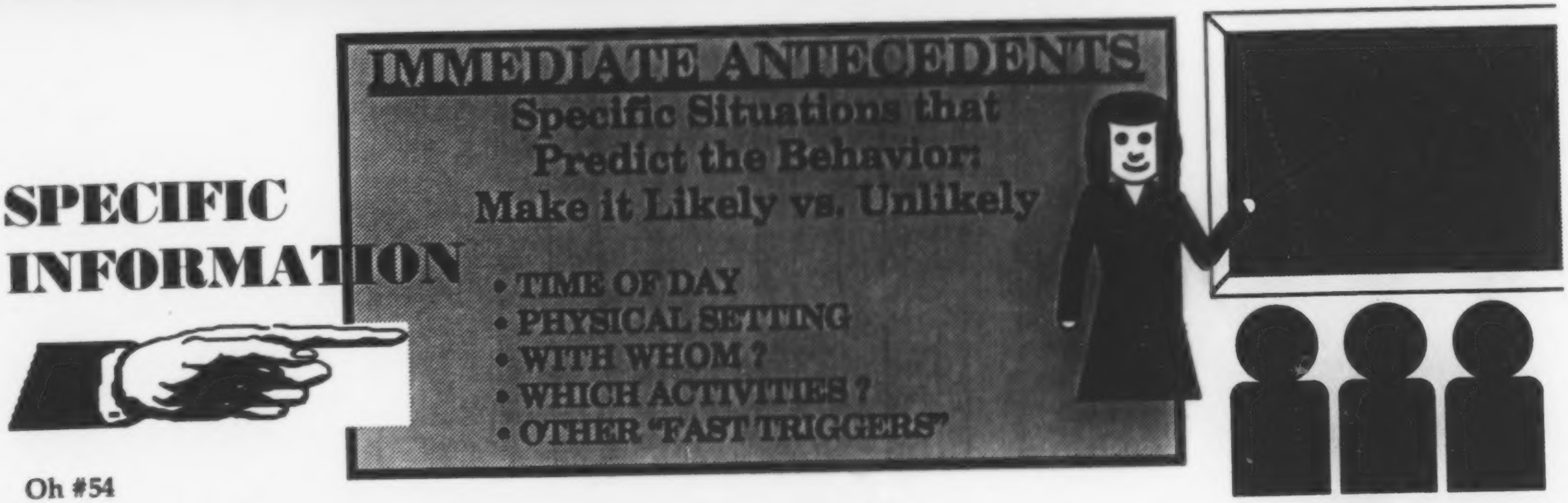
CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON BEHAVIOR



BROAD AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- Physical Setting: Density & Arrangement
- Medical Condition
- Diet
- Medication
- Adult Expectations
- Daily Schedule
- Sleep Patterns
- Instructional Match
- Predictability
- Staffing Patterns and Relationships

SETTING EVENTS



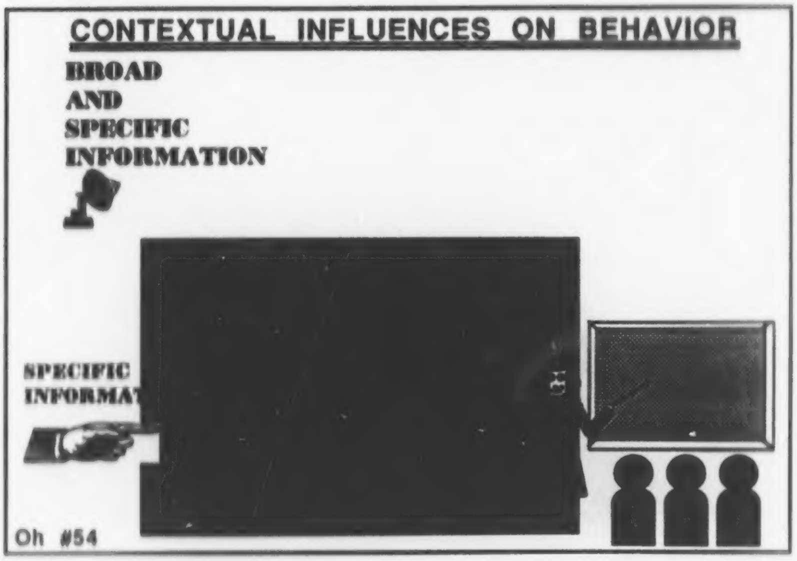
SPECIFIC INFORMATION

IMMEDIATE ANTECEDENTS

Specific Situations that Predict the Behavior: Make it Likely vs. Unlikely

- TIME OF DAY
- PHYSICAL SETTING
- WITH WHOM ?
- WHICH ACTIVITIES ?
- OTHER "FAST TRIGGERS"

Oh #54



CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON BEHAVIOR

BROAD
AND
SPECIFIC
INFORMATION

SPECIFIC
INFORMA

Oh #54

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Training Suggestions

This graphic serves as a concept activity for explaining the meaning of the relationship of antecedents (predictors) and setting events to broad and specific assessment information. The classroom at the bottom represents the immediate situation in which the problem behavior occurs. Listed are characteristics of the immediate situation that can be considered for their association with the problem behavior: time of day, physical setting, with whom, which activities, and other "fast triggers." Note that the term "triggers" is sometimes used for antecedents and the term "*fast* triggers" for *immediate* antecedents or predictors. Specific assessments often provide much information regarding immediate antecedents.

The upper half of the overhead depicts the more distant influences on a problem behavior - the setting events. This graphic suggests that setting events are removed from the immediate problem behavior, occurring over the horizon or at a temporal or physical distance from the problem. The radar icon suggests that the team should be sensitive to distant influences on the problem behavior, such as adult expectations or the degree of instructional match between student, curriculum, and instruction. Both broad and specific assessment information contribute to the analysis of setting events which are sometimes described as "*slow* triggers." Stressors, student attitudes, and similar conditions can be offered as potentially salient setting events.

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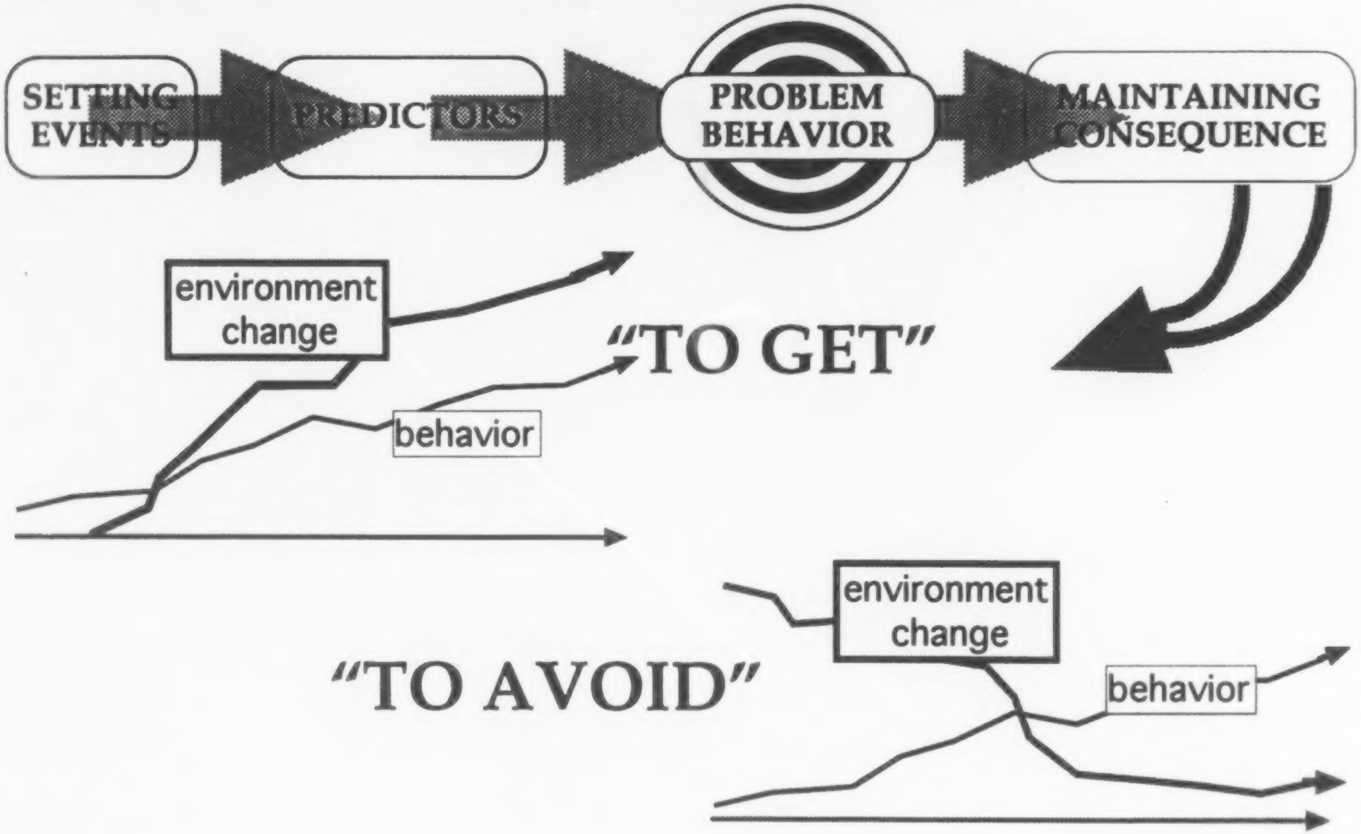
Functional Assessment

Assessing the "Function" of Behavior



SETTING EVENTS

PREDICTORS

PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

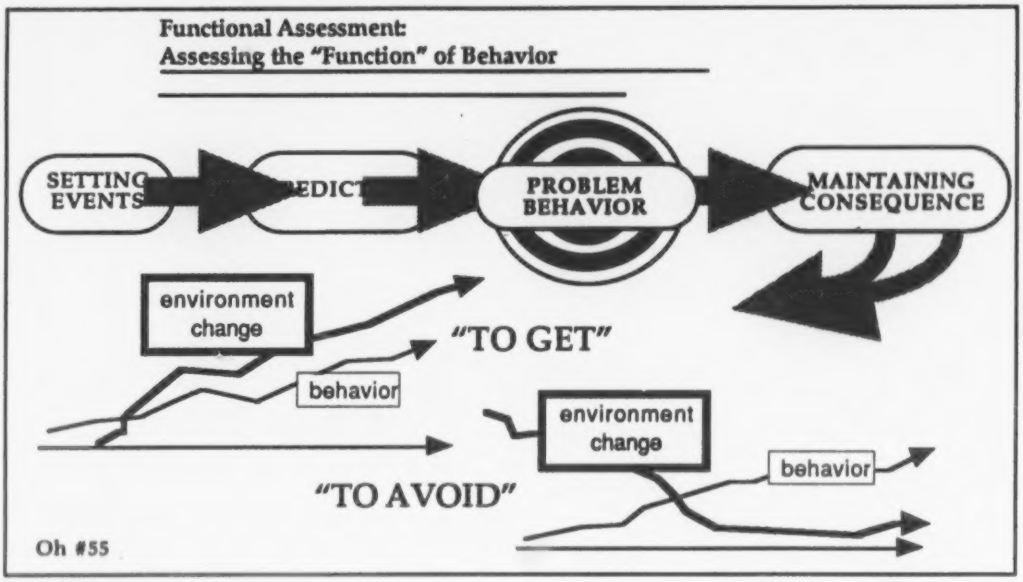
MAINTAINING CONSEQUENCE

"TO GET"

"TO AVOID"

environment change
behavior
environment change
behavior

Oh #55



Functional Assessment:
Assessing the "Function" of Behavior

Oh #55

* * *

Training Suggestions

These graphs are designed to represent how problem behavior can be reinforced by maintaining consequences that fit a pattern of either positive or negative reinforcement. Incorporate aspects of participants' prior knowledge about positive and negative reinforcement to explain the role of maintaining consequences. Refer to the chapter text and to the Effective Behavior Support Guidelines for more information. Some problem behaviors can be reinforced by causing events in the environment to increase; for example, an event in the environment increases in a positive direction as the behavior increases. Thus, the behavior serves "to get" something from the environment. In this situation, problem behaviors are maintained by consequences in which the student may get increased adult attention, peer attention, a preferred activity, or other benefit.

Use the lower pattern to explain how some problem behaviors can serve to decrease an event in the environment which is the pattern of negative reinforcement. The behavior increases as it leads to a decrease in the apparently aversive event in the environment. In this second case, the problem behavior is shown to serve the function of "avoiding" some event or situation in the environment that the student seems to find aversive.

Instructional Support Team Process
Elementary Student Assistance
Issues of Resilience, Risk, Protection and Prevention

I. Child-Environment Characteristics of a Resilient Child

II. Definitions of Risk and Protective Factors

III. How Risk and Protective Factors Work

IV. Types of Protective Factors

V. Principles of Early Intervention and Prevention

VI. Characteristics of Effective Prevention Efforts

VII. Implications of Research for Preventive Mental Health and IST

Oh #56

Instructional Support Team Process
Elementary Student Assistance
Issues of Resilience, Risk, Protection and Prevention

I. Child-Environment Characteristics of a Resilient Child

II. Definitions of Risk and Protective Factors

III. How Risk and Protective Factors Work

IV. Types of Protective Factors

V. Principles of Early Intervention and Prevention

VI. Characteristics of Effective Prevention Efforts

VII. Implications of Research for Preventive Mental Health and IST

Oh #56

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Training Suggestions

Provide the complete outline (see following two pages) as a handout for each participant. Use the main heading outline Overhead #56 to guide a summary presentation and discussion of core student assistance issues of risk factors, resilience, protective factors, and preventive intervention. For more in-depth information, advise participants to obtain and study the three articles that are the basis for this outline.

Employ structured adaptations to supplement or replace a simple lecture approach; for example, asking participants to brainstorm their beliefs about the principles of effective preventive mental health could be used to introduce a discussion. Alternatively, participants could coach each other in the content using a jigsaw cooperative structure and the original source material. Be creative in your methods while maintaining full regard for a thorough review of the content.

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Instructional Support Team Process
Elementary Student Assistance
Issues of Resilience, Risk, Protection and Prevention

I. Child-Environment Characteristics of a Resilient Child[1]

A. Temperament and disposition characteristics
  - flexible and regulated temperament
  - high self-esteem
  - internal locus of control - autonomy

B. Supportive Family Environment
  - parental warmth
  - cohesiveness - closeness
  - order and organization

C. Supportive Individuals & Systems in Everyday Life
  - system of social support
  - availability of positive models

II. Definitions of Risk and Protective Factors[2]

Risk Factors: conditions in a child's background, skills, history, support system, and social milieu that are associated with a high probability of earlier onset, increased severity and longer duration of major mental health problems

Protective Factors: conditions that improve a child's resistance to risk factors and disorder

III. How Risk and Protective Factors Work[2]

Risk factors have cumulative effects (increasing exponentially) (based on number, duration, and intensity of risk factors)

Protective factors are known to undo or limit effects of risk factors

The effects of exposure to risk factors can be attenuated by characteristics of the child and the child's environment

IV. Types of Protective Factors[2]

Child Characteristics: temperament; attitudes; skills: specific behavioral & cognitive skills can be taught

Child's Environment: social supports, parental warmth, family bonds, appropriate discipline, adult monitoring, and supervision

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[1] Compas, B. E. (1987) .

[2] Coie, J.D., Watt, N.F., West S.G., Hawkins, J.D., Asarnow, J.R., Markman, H.J., Ramey, S.L., Shure, M.B., and Long. B. (1993)

Instructional Support Team Process
Elementary Student Assistance

Issues of Resilience, Risk, Protection and Prevention

V. Principles of Early Intervention and Prevention[2]

Ideally, preventive intervention should occur before the effects of risk factors become stable (e.g., preadolescent antisocial behavior)

Prevention is ideal

Interventions can be individual or systemic
- students at high risk require direct assessment
- school-wide interventions in response to poverty, violence, etc.

Effective intervention requires coordinated action across systems and specialties

VI. Characteristics of Effective Prevention Efforts[3]

Preventive interventions are targeted to specific needs of the individual or group, with full understanding of the problem area involved

Prevention activities are designed to alter the life trajectory of participants, setting the individual on a new developmental course

Effective programs provide people with...
- more skills to cope more effectively
- social support in the face of stressful life conditions

Effective programs strengthen the natural support of family, school, and community settings

Effective programs conduct their activities systematically and with regular and systematic objective assessment

VII. Implications of Research for Preventive Mental Health and IST[2]

Work within a developmental framework

Greater success can be expected of prevention efforts designed to maximize the adaptive fit between the child and the present environment, using strategies delivered in the environment

Involve teachers, parents, and other students within the layers of influence surrounding the student

---

[3] Price, R.H., Cowen, E.L., Lorion, R.P., and Ramos-McKay, Julia (1989)

Criteria for Conducting a Comprehensive Functional Assessment

√ challenging behavior persists despite consistently implemented support plans based on brief, less formal assessment

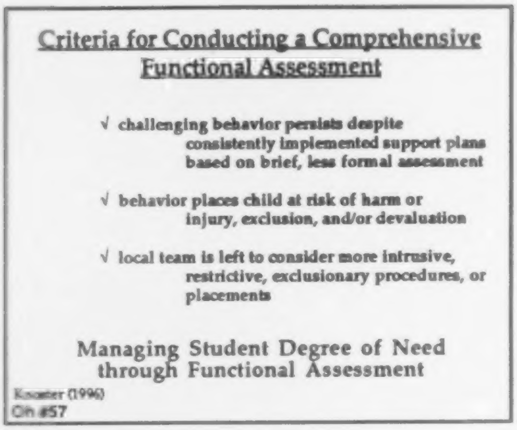
√ behavior places child at risk of harm or injury, exclusion, and/or devaluation

√ local team is left to consider more intrusive, restrictive, exclusionary procedures, or placements

Managing Student Degree of Need through Functional Assessment

Knoster (1996)

Oh #57



Criteria for Conducting a Comprehensive Functional Assessment

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Managing Student Degree of Need
through Functional Assessment

Knoster (1996)
Oh #57

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead to supplement a discussion of degree of need and instructional assessment for behavior and student assistance. Offer the checked criteria as benchmarks that teams can use in evaluating a student's need for a comprehensive functional assessment. These criteria describe those situations where a student's degree of need for instructional support calls for a thorough functional assessment. Most students receiving instructional support will not require complete application of functional assessment methods and procedures; however, under these benchmark conditions or similar circumstances students would likely be candidates for a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE), unless the school has the resources to manage the process within the parameters of regular education.

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Functional Assessment

Broad Assessment Methods

- Parent Interview
- Problem-Framing Interview

RE: A-B-C, routines, expectations, interventions tried, coping skills, stressors, social skills

- Student Interview
- Rating Scales
- Questionnaires
- Records review
- Survey of other adults and situations

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)

Oh #58

Functional Assessment

Specific Assessment Methods

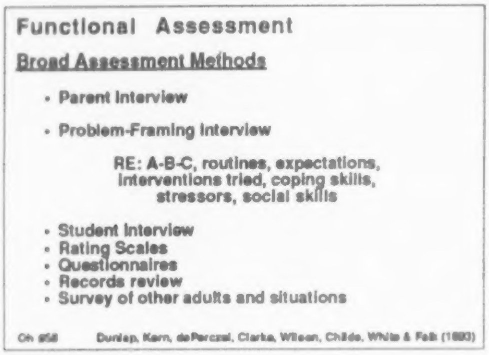
- Observations

  in situations with problem behavior(s)
  in situations w/o problem behavior(s)

- Scatterplots

- A-B-C Charts

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)



Functional Assessment

Broad Assessment Methods

- Parent Interview
- Problem-Framing Interview

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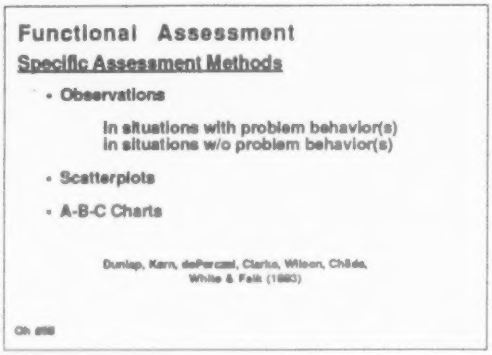
- Student Interview
- Rating Scales
- Questionnaires
- Records review
- Survey of other adults and situations

Oh #58 Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)



Functional Assessment

Specific Assessment Methods

- Observations

In situations with problem behavior(s)
in situations w/o problem behavior(s)

- Scatterplots
- A-B-C Charts

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs,
White & Falk (1993)

Oh #59

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use these overheads to guide an overview of broad and specific assessment activities. These activities provide the team with information regarding the functional relationships that exist between the problem behavior and various situational variables to be summarized and analyzed in a competing analysis.

Compare broad and specific assessment activities for behavior and student assistance with similar procedures used in the assessment of an academic problem. Examples of interview formats, behavior checklists, scatterplots, A-B-C charts, and the Functional Assessment Observation Form may be offered as exemplifying various forms of broad and specific assessment.

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Functional Assessment

Linking Assessment to Intervention

- Eliminating Antecedents & Setting Events for Problem Behavior
- Creating/Strengthening Antecedents for Positive Behavior
- Eliminating Reinforcement for Problem Behavior
- Teaching Competing Positive Behaviors

Tobin (1994)

Functional Assessment

Types of Intervention Linked to Controlling Events in the Environment

- Identification of Setting Events
  - √ removal
  - √ change: adapting/modifying
- Identification of Antecedents
  - √ removal
  - √ change: adapting/modifying
- Identification of Behavior-Consequence Link
  - √ discontinue - i.e., "extinction"
  - √ reinforcement of replacement behavior
  - √ non-contingent reinforcement (response independent reinforcement)

Functional Assessment

Functional Analysis & Demonstration

- Analog trial & demonstration:
  (under controlled conditions)

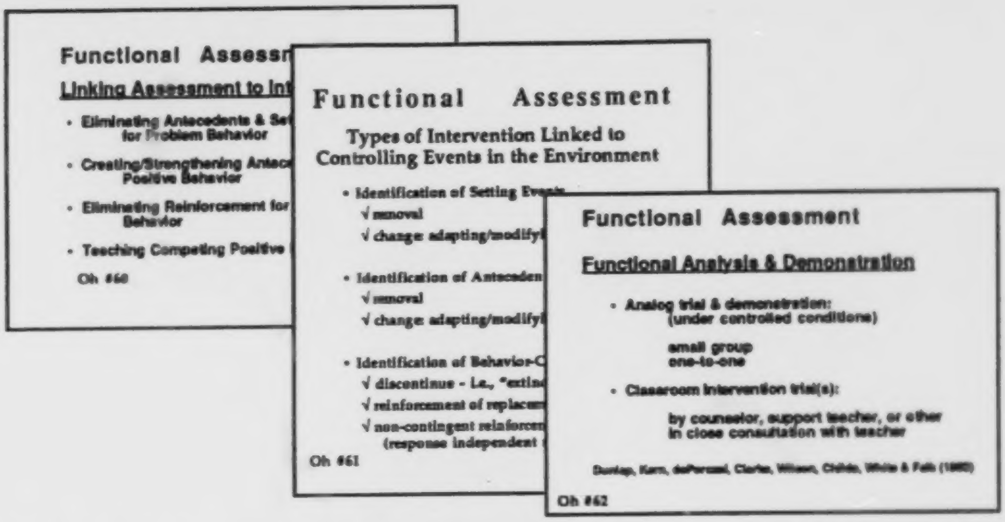
  small group
  one-to-one

- Classroom intervention trial(s):

  by counselor, support teacher, other
  in close consultation with teacher

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)

Oh #62
IST 1295



Functional Assess

Linking Assessment to Int

- Eliminating Antecedents & Se for Problem Behavior
- Creating/Strengthening Antec Positive Behavior
- Eliminating Reinforcement for Behavior
- Teaching Competing Positive

Oh #60

Functional Assessment

Types of Intervention Linked to Controlling Events in the Environment

- Identification of Setting Events
  - √ removal
  - √ change: adapting/modify
- Identification of Anteceden
  - √ removal
  - √ change: adapting/modify
- Identification of Behavior-C
  - √ discontinue - i.e., "extin
  - √ reinforcement of replace
  - √ non-contingent reinforcem (response independent

Oh #61

Functional Assessment

Functional Analysis & Demonstration

- Analog trial & demonstration: (under controlled conditions)

  small group
  one-to-one

- Classroom intervention trial(s):

  by counselor, support teacher, or other in close consultation with teacher

Dunlap, Kern, dePerczel, Clarke, Wilson, Childs, White & Falk (1993)

Oh #62

* * *

Training Suggestions

Use this overhead sequence to introduce participants to the linkage of functional assessment findings and intervention design. Overhead #60 offers a *basic* description of the pathways to follow in altering setting events, antecedents (predictors), and maintaining consequences (reinforcement) associated with a problem behavior. Overhead #61 elaborates this description by acknowledging that setting events and antecedents for problem behavior are not so much eliminated, as adapted and modified, to lessen the likelihood of the problem behavior. Overhead #61 also provides some specifics about approaches to weakening the connection between the problem behavior and maintaining consequences. It suggests using extinction procedures, differential reinforcement of other behavior, or differential reinforcement of desirable competing behaviors to replace the problem behavior.

Use overhead #62 to explain the use of functional analysis (or experimental analysis) to confirm the hypothesized relationships between the problem behavior and situational variables. Though it may have limited application in the IST process, presenters may find the description of a functional analysis useful as representing the quintessence of functional assessment in particular and instructional assessment in general. Functional analysis is a systematic attempt to reproduce the problem behavior by replicating the conditions that are thought to control the behavior. Emphasize that use of functional analysis in the schools, though rare, can only occur with the full participation of the student's family, teachers, and others for the sole purpose of identifying effective interventions.

Link the idea of a functional analysis to the search for effective interventions in which the competing analysis is used to guide the team to strategies that have a higher probability of success. In a sense, testing the effectiveness of selected interventions with a student in a one-to-one or small group setting in the classroom represents a functional analysis of sorts. Information from the competing analysis can guide the team to test strategies that will directly modify or eliminate the conditions that are demonstrated to be encouraging the problem.

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I. Curricular Variables

- a. Level of Curricular Material
- b. Instructional Pace
- c. Relevant Practice Provided
- d. Mode of Task Presentation
- e. Mode of Student Response
- f. Scope and Sequence of Tasks
- g. Criterion for Student Success

Oh #CS-1

II. Instructional Variables

- a. Direct Instruction Time
- b. Allocation of Engaged Time
- c. Degree of Task Structure/Grouping
- d. Guided and Independent Practice
- e. Meaningful Opportunities to Respond
- f. Amount and Type of Feedback
- g. Amount and Type of Cues and Prompts

Oh #CS-2

III. Student Performance Variables

- a. Time on Task
- b. Task Completion
- c. Task Comprehension
- d. Organizational Skills
- e. Metacognitive Skills
- f. Work Habits
- g. Functional/Behavioral Stra
- h. Coping Skills Strategies
- i. Social Skills

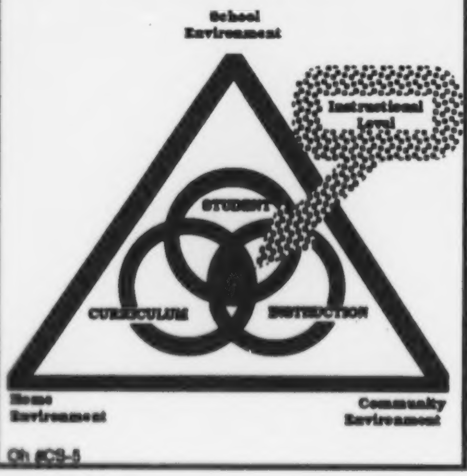
Oh #CS-3

IV. Environmental Variables

- a. Expectations
- b. Communication Patterns
- c. Stressors
- d. Support Systems
- e. Cultural/Language Appropriateness

#CS-4

Managing Learning Conditions


School Environment
Instructional Level
STUDENT
CURRICULUM
INSTRUCTION
Home Environment
Community Environment

Oh #CS-5

(See Appendix II: Training Suggestions.)

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CHAPTER

6

ACTIVITIES/ TRAINING SUGGESTIONS

Chad Activity

Understanding the Basic Purpose of Instructional Assessment

Chad: 2nd grader

Task: alphabetize four words

Dog	3
Cat	4
Apple	2
Ball	1

What are your impressions?

Oh #14

* * *

Training Suggestions

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to allow participants to examine and reflect on a student work sample, to develop impressions about the student's understanding of the lesson, and to determine what the teacher would do next to teach the concept.

Objectives: Participants will apply focused questions to systematically and collaboratively analyze a young student's response to an alphabetizing task. Participants will conclude that there are fundamental questions that must be answered to assess students' learning and to ultimately provide effective instruction.

Materials: Overhead #14

Procedure: (about 20 minutes)
Working in teams, participants are shown a student work sample and are guided through an inquiry process as they examine it. The following training script is offered for this activity:

What are the basic purposes of instructional assessment? Perhaps the best way to respond to this question is to view a snapshot of the instructional assessment process through the eyes of a child and through the eyes of your team as representing the teacher. The scene unfolds early in the second grade. The teacher has been teaching the class about alphabetizing and wants to see if the class has acquired the basic concept.

Present Overhead #14. The teacher places the following words, "Dog", "Cat", "Apple", and "Ball" vertically on the blackboard and instructs each member of the class to alphabetize these four words. Chad was quick to respond by writing down these four numbers.

Dog	3
Cat	4
Apple	2
Ball	1

As teams, spend a few minutes with your thoughts while you form your impressions, then describe your impressions. What was your initial thinking? Did he understand the directions? Did he know how to alphabetize? Did he miss the task completely? Was he confused with a previous task? Is your natural inclination to stop asking questions at this time and to reteach the concept? Or would you delve deeper into other possibilities?

Just how did he come up with these numbers? Better still, what was he thinking? What patterns do you see? When your colleagues examined his response, what were their impressions? Interestingly, Chad's response is correct, so try to figure out precisely what he did. If your team is still at a loss, now what do you do?

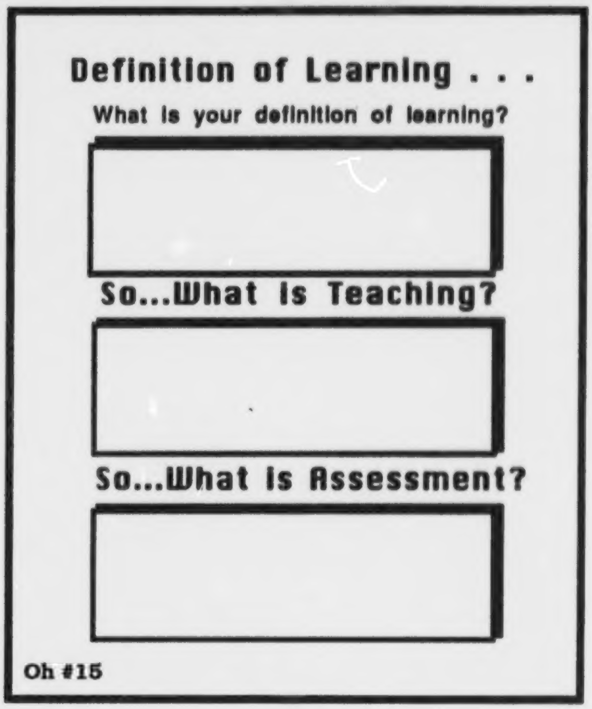
Naturally, the smart thing to do would be to ask Chad to explain his thinking in order to determine the type of processing he undertook in approaching the task. This common sense suggestion should emerge as a prerequisite. The problem though, is that you did not have access to Chad. However, the answers are right in front of your eyes - you just don't see it. You simply saw his work through your own lenses so to speak. We have used this task to take you beyond your initial impressions to see the completion of the task through Chad's lenses.

Let's work through the task using Chad's thinking to see how he performed it. First, look at the order from top to bottom in which the words appear. "Dog" appears first, followed by "Cat", then "Apple", then "Ball". Now look at the order from top to bottom in which the numbers appear. The top number is "3" which corresponds to the third word "Apple". The second number is "4" which corresponds to the fourth word "Ball", and so forth. He alphabetizes using the number to represent the order in which the words appeared. Now do you understand how he performed the task? Does he know how to alphabetize these four words? Did he work efficiently? He simply did it a different way, a very unusual, but very efficient way.

Engage support team members in a discussion about what they learned specifically about instructional assessment from the Chad Activity. Using their responses, build the case that the primary purpose for assessment is about inquiry. (See narrative text in Chapter 2)

Related Activity: If children are present, conduct a race having them alphabetize the four words as fast as they can. You will merely write the numbers. Analyze the children's responses to further apply the

Definition of Assessment Activity



Definition of Learning . . .

What is your definition of learning?

So...What is Teaching?

So...What is Assessment?

Oh #15

* * *

Training Suggestions

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to have participants analyze the interdependent nature of instruction and assessment.

Objectives: Participants will discuss and share their definitions of learning, teaching, and assessment.

Materials: Overheads #15, #16, #17 and #18.

Procedure: (about 30 minutes)
From the preceding activity (CHAD) team members should be aware that they will only be strategic once they know their students. This team activity focuses on defining learning, teaching, and assessment. It delves more completely into the interdependent nature of instruction and assessment.

Present Overhead #15.

Working again in teams, participants are shown each rectangle and question in succession as they are guided through a discussion of each definition. The following training procedures are offered for this activity:

It is quite obvious that assessment should facilitate both learning and teaching. Instruct the teams to go beyond the obvious, though, and discuss and define the **meaning of learning.** Give them three minutes to complete their discussions and to write their definitions. (At the end of the three minutes, select a spokesperson from each team to share their team's response.) Teams are likely to say that learning involves: 1) acquiring new information, 2) retaining it, and 3) applying it. After the teams have shared their definitions, ask them to go farther by considering what they do as adult learners that is different from what students generally do. You should elicit the fact that adult learners self-select, self-monitor, and self-regulate their own learning. Reinforce these points by presenting Overhead #16.

With this view of learning, instruct the teams to take two minutes to discuss and define the **meaning of teaching.** Again, ask the teams to share their definition. Direct them to conclude that the real purpose of teaching is to guide and facilitate student learning. Reinforce these points by presenting Overhead #17.

Lastly, instruct the teams to discuss and define **the meaning of assessment.** Repeat the team discussion and sharing process. A variety of appropriate definitions will arise from the different teams. In addition to their definitions, share the one on Overhead #18.

Continue to urge the teams to go beyond even these definitions to discover the primary purpose of instructional assessment which is to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

The Sammit Activity

The Sammit

Once when I was a tomlett, my fantom and I were pundering in line to buy patmots for the Sammit. Finally, there was only one phamlet between us and the ripler munter. This phamlet made a big tesion on me. There were eight camplers, all probably endering the age of 12. You could tell meyle did not have a lot of willen. Their willen were not matistic, but meyle were clean. The camplers were well-done, all of them pundering in line, two-by-two zoneret their potents holding zorants. Meyle were telletly tennering about the plowns, ellectrits and other gotts meyle would wint that noster.

70% Knowns

Oh #22-A

Also Overheads #22-B, #22-C, #22-D, #22-E

* *

Training Suggestions

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to allow participants to experience frustration in a reading activity where the level of known material is too low for understanding to occur.

Objectives: Participants will read an unfamiliar passage which is presented at diverse levels of known and unknown material. They will experience various levels of frustration and understanding until the passage is adjusted to 93-97% known vocabulary.

Materials: Overheads #22-A, #22-B, #22-C, #22-D, & #22-E; paper copies of these overheads for each participant (optional).

Procedure: (about 20 minutes)

Present Overhead #20-A (70% Knowns). Ask the participants to read the passage and tell what it is about. Encourage them to guess by considering context clues.

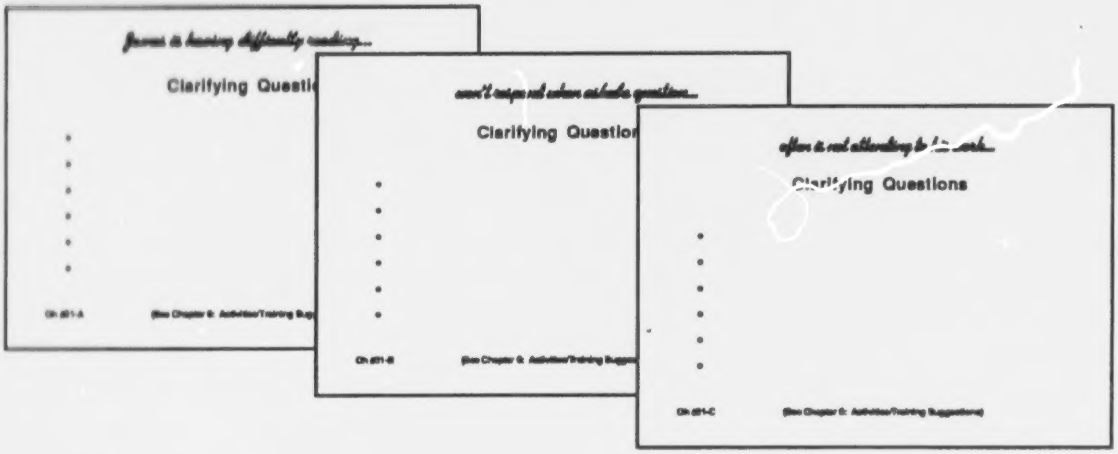
Offer them the easier passage on Overhead #20-B (80% Knowns). Ask participants if the easier passage helps them to understand the story; encourage them to guess at the passage's meaning.

Also ask participants if the higher percentage of known words increased their comfort with the passage and helped them to be more strategic (e.g., using context clues) to interpret the meaning.

Finally, present Overhead 20-C (93% Knowns) and ask the same questions. Participants are probably now at a comfort level with this passage and will use context clues to unlock the meaning of the few unknown words. Lead them to draw conclusions about creating an instructional level by determining the level of known material and adjusting the introduction of new material in each and every lesson.

NOTE: The complete text of "The Circus" (OVERHEADS #22-D and #22-E) may also be presented in overhead format so participants can enjoy the entire story.

James
Chapter 3 Example Case Activity



Clarifying Questi

Clarifying Questior

Clarifying Questions

* *

Training Suggestions

This information has been excerpted from the text of Chapter 3 related to the example case of James. Use this activity to practice formulating questions.

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand data collection and its relationship to problem clarification.

Objectives: Participants will analyze a request for assistance for vague language and formulate appropriate questions to gain meaningful, observable, and clarifying information to help guide the direction of assessment activities.

Materials: Chapter 3 Example Case Activity handout for each participant, and Overheads #31-A, #31-B, and #31-C.

Procedure: (about 30 minutes)

Present "James, Chapter 3 Example Case" to the participants as a two-part handout. The first part (pages 1 and 2) is the actual activity based on Overheads #31-A, #31-B, and #31-C. Introduce the case by asking participants to read the first two paragraphs on their handout. Continue by showing each overhead in sequence to guide a discussion on problem clarification. Working in their teams, participants will develop clarifying questions that consider factors related to the curriculum, instruction, and school/home environments, in addition to questions concerning the student's performance.

Encourage participants to think of questions that would help describe the concern in more observable terms and lead the assessment toward a specified statement regarding the discrepancy between the student's current level of performance and the teacher's expectations. Provide example questions from

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Chapter 3 text, if needed.

Use pages 3 and 4 to inform participants about the assessment results in this example case. Have each team divide into three subgroups to read the assessment findings: one group will read Interviews, one group will read Systematic Observation, and one group will read Curriculum-based Assessment. Then have each team share the information among themselves and relate it to their own team practice in terms of roles, assessment procedures, and methods of sharing information and making assessment decisions. As in the Case Study (Appendix II), you may need to remind participants that example cases are often not as complete as they would like.

JAMES

Requesting Assistance

A third grade teacher determines that a particular student James is falling behind the rest of the class. The teacher reports that James is having difficulty reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work. The teacher is perplexed by this situation and feels a colleague/team approach could assist her in analyzing the problem and designing a more effective instructional program for James. She accesses the IST through the process instituted at her school.

Problem Clarification

In the initial steps of the IST entry phase, the team's efforts are focused on clarifying the problem that was stated in the request for assistance. At their first checkpoint, the team in the example case of James, reviewed the request for assistance and generated reflective questions to help clarify the concern. In addition to clarifying the problem, reflective questions help to narrow the focus of the presenting concern and to state it in precise observable terms. This precision helps to guide the team's assessment activities. A vague concern such as "James is having difficulty in reading, won't respond when asked a question, and often is not attending to his work" gives the team too little information.

To help clarify the concern and provide direction for assessment, questions related to James's reading might include:

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In terms of James's reluctance to respond, questions might include:

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In terms of James's attention, questions might include:

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Other questions reflect consideration of factors related to the curriculum, instruction, and school/home environments as well as the student's performance. Parents are considered team members and are asked, by way of an interview, to share information that the team will find helpful in searching for proper strategies for their child. One function of the parent interview is to begin to build a positive working relationship with them. Equally important is the information that the parents provide related to their perception of their child's performance.

In James's case, the parents were advised that their child's teacher had requested the team's assistance in finding strategies to use in the classroom and they were encouraged to participate in the team process. For James, this interview would be centered around questions such as

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The function of the student interview is to gather information with regard to the student's perception of himself and his involvement in school. The team must be prudent in eliciting this information so as not to breach issues of family confidentiality. Important questions to ask James might be:

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The team determined that the support teacher would conduct interviews with the classroom teacher, other teachers, James, and his mother to answer these questions. They would meet again in one week to review the new information. This would be their second checkpoint.

Summary of Assessment Data

Interviews

The support teacher summarized the interview information and communicated it to the classroom teacher, the guidance counselor, and the Title I teacher. This second checkpoint allowed the team to review the information gathered from the interviews and to further reflect on the problem.

As a result of the classroom teacher interview, the difficulty in reading was somewhat clarified: James cannot consistently identify the four elements of a story even though the rest of the class demonstrates this skill. Reading instruction immediately follows the morning recess and is just prior to the lunch break.

Other teachers who have James in their class did not report similar problems and concerns. In regard to James's unresponsiveness, the team learned that James answers questions in other subject areas but seems not to want to participate in the reading discussions. He maintains eye contact and seems to be listening but never answers a question, even with prodding. Regarding James's attention to task, he is reportedly more attentive during math and other subjects than during reading. When he is off-task, he doesn't cause disruptions and isn't a discipline problem.

The telephone interview with James's mother indicated that this is the second school James has attended. As a family, they don't have much time to read, although James enjoys looking at books at home. James is sometimes self-conscious and has few friends at the new school; however, his mother feels that this will be short-lived as he has always been able to make friends in the past. James is very athletic; he has signed up for soccer and is looking forward to having teammates as friends.

James enjoyed his interview with the support teacher. He told her he didn't like answering questions in front of his classmates because he was afraid they would make fun of him if he was wrong. He doesn't have many friends and really wants the others to like him. James likes his teacher. Even though he feels he tries hard, he just can't seem to remember all the parts of a story.

Through written comments on the interview summary sheets and informal contacts and consultations, the team analyzed this information and planned the next step for assessment. It was determined that the presenting problem occurs in the regular classroom during reading class time. The team reflected on their lack of information specifically related to James's responses in whole-group reading class and other classroom contexts. In addition, there were lingering questions about his attention and being "off-task." They decided that the consequent assessment steps would occur during whole-group reading and other instruction which required reading. These would be in the form of systematic observations of James's responses in class as well as direct curriculum-based assessments in reading. The observations would be conducted by the guidance counselor. The support teacher and Title I teacher would share the responsibility for conducting the curriculum-based assessments. The team set the third checkpoint to occur at the completion of these particular assessment steps which they anticipated to be in approximately seven school days.

Systematic Observation

The team decided to use the Academic Learning Time (ALT) procedures and format that measures on-task, task completion, and task comprehension behaviors to observe James in reading class. They needed to know why "James does not display comprehension of the four story elements required to properly retell a story." This and two other areas of concern about James had been conveyed by the classroom teacher. She noted that he "won't respond when asked a question and often is not attending to his work." By engaging in systematic observations using the ALT procedure, the guidance counselor gathered relevant data which specifically addressed these concerns.

These observations indicated that James was on-task during reading class at a rate comparable to his peers. The data also showed that he had been given the same number of opportunities to respond as the rest of the class, and the time allowed for responding was adequate; however, James never raised his hand to indicate his having an answer. Even when the teacher prompted him to answer, James gave no oral response. In written work James completed tasks in the time allotted, but his answers were correct only 45% of the time. It was observed that he seemed to prefer to answer questions when he was given choices and could look back in the text of the story.

Curriculum-based Assessment Techniques

It required five curriculum-based assessment sessions conducted by both the Title I teacher and the support teacher to specifically identify the parameters of James's reading problem and to begin to generate workable strategies to ameliorate it. They did this in consultation with each other and the classroom teacher.

This CBA information indicated that he was able to decode words and derive meaning from them, using the classroom anthology reading text. For passage comprehension, though, he was not willing to take the risk of responding because he was uncertain of the four story elements: setting, character, problem and events. In a one-to-one setting he was more willing to respond. In this setting, his initial average accuracy rate on this task was 45%, compared to 80% for the rest of the class. The support teacher and Title I teacher also discovered during these CBA assessments that a strategy for determining story elements, called the story-mapping strategy, appeared to help James.

For their third checkpoint, the team met briefly to discuss the results of the observations and curriculum-based assessments. The ALT data combined with the information from previous interviews and the curriculum-based assessments led them to determine that the on-task and task completion issues did not need further investigation. Task comprehension was still a major concern at this time. Although James was obviously reluctant to respond aloud during whole-group reading class, his classroom teacher noted that he responded orally more often in a smaller group arrangement; this was also confirmed by the Title I teacher. Based on data gathered to this point, the team decided to focus on comprehension of story elements during the intervention period; these comprehension data form the baseline information needed to progress into the next phase of IST.

APPENDIX I

CURRICULUM-BASED ASSESSMENT Q and A

Clarifying Curriculum-Based Assessment

Attempting to clarify the meaning and use of curriculum-based assessment (CBA), Dr. Ed Gickling, an authority on this assessment practice, has responded to a number of questions that are frequently asked about concepts, practices, and strategies associated with curriculum-based assessment.

What exactly is Curriculum-Based Assessment?

Curriculum-based assessment (CBA) is one member of a group of assessment approaches which assert that the primary mission of assessment is optimum instruction for all children. It is based on a belief system that the best form of instructional assessment occurs in natural settings, under natural conditions, where the natural materials of the classroom are used. In this context, CBA has been defined as a system for determining the instructional needs of a student based upon the student's ongoing performance in existing course content to deliver instruction as effectively and efficiently as possible.

How does it compare to other forms of alternative assessment?

Direct assessment, naturalistic assessment, and authentic assessment are umbrella terms associated with alternative assessment. Other terms such as curriculum-based assessment, running records, portfolio assessment, learning progress maps, and student progress interviews reflect its more individualistic nature. Much of this assessment activity represents a general resurgence to sound natural assessment practices of the past, making it difficult to exactly chronicle its history. Relative to current events, though, we know that CBA started to gain national visibility in the early 1980's, running records in the mid 1980's, and portfolio assessment in the late 1980's. Regardless of the timing or the specific nature of the various authentic assessment practices, they all have four basic features or principles in common. They all believe that instructional assessment (1) occurs naturally, (2) is multidimensional, (3) is dynamic, and (4) is student-centered.

Are these assessment practices compatible?

They are very compatible. For example, portfolio assessment promotes the continuous sampling of a variety of work, while progress maps display the big picture of what a student has learned. CBA is equally concerned with obtaining continuous snapshots of what the student is able to do and how the student is progressing and responding to instruction to form the bigger picture. It should be justly noted that all of these assessment practices place as much emphasis on assessing *how* the student is actually processing information as they do in assessing the student's work products. Naturally, what goes into portfolios, running records, learning progress maps, or the snapshots collected relevant to CBA, must be representative and a direct and accurate reflection of what the student is actually doing in the classroom.

Is CBA compatible with holistic thought?

When CBA is viewed in its broad context, it is compatible with whole language efforts. There is no argument that the purpose behind listening, speaking, reading, writing, and signing is to communicate and that the overriding purpose of the communication process is to obtain meaning. The use of good literature and meaningful content at all levels in developing the oral and print processing dimensions of language is critical; in addition, connecting reading and writing as natural extensions of one another, as opposed to separating spelling and writing from the teaching of reading, supports the more contextual and holistic nature of learning. When implementing CBA, practitioners should select their content first and carry their teaching to its logical conclusion, which is to create conditions that enable the student to interact and obtain meaning from original texts using meaningful contexts. Practitioners must realize the flawed nature of trying to teach one minute piece of information after another, feeling that somehow these pieces will magically connect to develop mature readers and writers without the use of connected discourse. Interestingly, the word "context" itself means to be connected and coherent.

What makes CBA Unique?

CBA provides a success-oriented safety net for students in the form of a blueprint to guide teachers in making instructional decisions for those truly in need of academic support. Realizing that the specific nature of the curriculum strongly influences the student's ability to learn from the curriculum, a goal of CBA is to eliminate the mismatch which exists between the limited entry skills and prior knowledge of students and the inordinate demands placed upon them by curriculum assignments. This is partially accomplished by maintaining students' learning activities at instructional levels, thus affording them appropriate margins of challenge and realistic opportunities for success on a frequent and continuous basis. Context, content, meaning, process, and product are all central to maintaining learning conditions for students. Within the framework of CBA we constantly search for meaningful ways to maintain these conditions, to apply these effective concepts, and to develop strategies for delivering them successfully.

Why is CBA an integral part of IST?

There are a number of reasons why CBA is used within the IST process. Its compatibility with current reading theories and practices and its adaptability to all types of materials and instructional contexts makes it particularly well suited for IST use. Its research base, and its development and refinement have always focused on students in need of learning support. Its strategies for assessing and activating prior knowledge are basic to current learning theory and sound learning principles which can be easily translated into appropriate levels of challenge and sustainable success. The dynamic features of instructional assessment permit users of CBA to constantly monitor how well students are processing instruction and progressing toward various outcomes, thus enabling teachers to detect subtle changes in learning. This analysis allows team members to evaluate the success of both classroom programs and support services in their ability to maintain students at instructional levels and to meet the specific learning needs of each student.

On what tenets or principles is CBA based?

CBA is based on an integrated approach to instruction, effective teaching principles, and current learning theory. Its intent is to help bring assessment back into the classroom and to return the curriculum to a prominent role within the instructional assessment process. This effort has resulted in a number of fundamental changes with regard to how assessment impacts upon instruction and how instruction is delivered effectively to poor achieving students. These changes represent a departure from many of the traditional tenets of testing and teaching - changes which are reflected in these basic principles:

1. **CBA complements prevailing curriculum approaches.** CBA was designed for use with a variety of theoretical approaches to teaching. It adheres to a generic set of principles which can be applied to any number of curriculum programs and practices.
2. **CBA aligns assessment practices with what is actually taught in the classroom.** With the curriculum being used as the media for assessment, teachers can know for certain that they are assessing how the student performs, how the student is thinking and processing information, and how effective their teaching practices are with reference to what is being learned and what is being taught.
3. **CBA starts with what the student knows in building an integrated program.** Assessment and teaching practices traditionally have focused on a student's deficiencies without due regard for what the student knows and can do. This practice often results in the student receiving disjointed assignments containing excessive amounts of unknown information. CBA is structured to correct these inadequacies.
4. **CBA regulates task variability, task demand, and the pace of instruction to insure student success.** Efforts are concentrated on providing students with appropriate levels of challenge while assuring frequent and continuous task success, thus accounting for natural variations in students' learning.
5. **CBA strives for high uniform scores among all students.** Traditional teaching practices involve giving identical assignments to students of differing abilities with the expectation that normal variations in scores will occur. By honoring natural differences among students and providing appropriate levels of challenge in their learning tasks, even students with learning problems are consistently able to earn high scores.
6. **CBA allows for the direct and continuous assessment of student progress.** CBA provides continuous snapshots of how the student is progressing and how instruction is being matched to the needs of each student. Performance is constantly monitored with respect to instructional goals.

What are the benefits of using CBA?

As school personnel internalize the philosophy and become familiar with integrating assessment practices and intervention strategies, they can see the immediate benefits that come from applying CBA. One teacher captured the essence of what many teachers have attempted to express in stating that with CBA she always feels in charge and always knows what to do each day. A few obvious benefits accrued to school administrators, teachers, and most of all, to the students themselves, are highlighted next.

Administrators

1. CBA complements current theoretical approaches to the teaching and learning.
2. CBA links assessment practices directly to the curriculum used in schools and to the instruction occurring in schools.
3. CBA enhances instructional accountability through the continuous monitoring of student progress and sustained academic success.

Teachers

1. CBA helps teachers take charge of the curriculum they use in school instead of feeling that the curriculum is in charge.
2. CBA helps teachers access students' prior knowledge while supporting the use of meaningful content.
3. CBA enables teachers to deal more effectively with an increasingly diverse student population.

Students

1. CBA enables students to use their prior knowledge by building on a base of what they know and are able to do.
2. CBA allows students to work at their instructional levels and to feel comfortable and competent about their performance.
3. CBA enables students to interact with meaningful content and to progress systematically based upon their own rate and pace of learning.

APPENDIX II

CASE STUDY

TOMMY
CASE STUDY

* *

Training Suggestions

This case study presents an example of how the checkpoint structure is used during the entry phase of instructional assessment and engages the participants in the activities involved at various assessment checkpoints for this case. Conduct this activity after the entire entry phase information has been presented and participants have an initial working knowledge of the need to assess all instructional environment variables.

An understanding of the instructional environment variables is critical to the success of this activity. A brief explanation of the instructional environment variables accompanies this case study. (See overheads #CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, CS-4, CS-5 and the accompanying training suggestions.) If needed, please spend a few minutes to review this information with participants.

Purpose: This activity synthesizes aspects of Chapter 3 entry phase information and the checkpoint structure by providing guided practice in organization and analysis of data and formulation of reflective questions to guide assessment.

Objectives: Working in teams, participants will practice organizing assessment information and analyzing and evaluating its relevancy to the assessment needs of Tommy, who is the focus student in this case study. They will also have guided opportunities to practice formulating reflective questions and determining specific assessment steps to take to refine their understanding of Tommy and his instructional needs.

Materials: Copies of the Tommy Case Study for each participant, accompanying Overheads #CS-1, CS-2, CS-3, CS-4, CS-5, and Trainer Sample Pages.

Procedure: (about 2 hours)

This case study leads teams through a request for instructional support that requires them to apply information presented on entry phase assessment processes and the checkpoint structure. It has three segments which parallel the three checkpoints presented in the case. Please see attached Trainer Sample Pages for scripted sample suggestions on completing the information that the teams are asked to provide at various steps in the Second and Third Checkpoints. These sample suggestions may be utilized at your discretion, if needed. Reference to these suggestions is indicated at each asterisk (*) in the text below.

First Checkpoint

The first checkpoint activity serves as a model to familiarize the participants with the case study and background information and provides an example of team activities for the 8-Step Checkpoint Structure explained in the manual. All known information has been provided; however, please note that this case study is not to be used as a definitive model of how every team operates in terms of school assessment procedures, or staff roles, responsibilities, interactions or perceptions.

The cover sheet for the case study is a guide for reviewing the eight steps in the checkpoint process and the importance of reflective questioning. Subsequent pages describe the team composition and give the background on the teacher's initial statement of concern. Read through the first three pages with the teams to familiarize them with the case information. Continue to familiarize participants with the format and the layout of the activity handout.

Emphasize the importance of Steps 6, 7, and 8 to specifically identify what data to collect, how to collect it, who will be doing it, and when the information will be shared. Successive checkpoints are typically set for a few days from the preceding checkpoint to allow for the information to be gathered; it conveys the expectation that assessment assignments will be completed by the date set.

Second Checkpoint

Instruct the teams to complete the columns in Step 2 on page CS-11 by organizing the gathered information.* Tell them that some information might fall into more than one category. Call their attention to the fact that in actual practice, as information accumulates over time, it will be added to the initial grid established at the first checkpoint.

Reflective questions are provided. Direct the teams to complete the two columns which are blank in Steps 6 and 7 on page CS-14.* Have the teams consider specific assessment procedures, methods, and protocols that would yield the data-based information that is needed to clarify the problem, develop accurate hypotheses, and direct further assessment activities. Especially encourage the participation of school psychologists, guidance counselors, and other team members who may have special expertise and experience in assessment procedures that yield observable and measurable information. Guide a group discussion and provide feedback to participants after they have completed this activity.

Restate the importance of scheduling the next checkpoint in Step 8.

Third Checkpoint

This checkpoint provides additional guided practice in organizing information. The participants also have an opportunity to practice formulating reflective questions.

Direct the participants to organize the data provided on the grid in Step 2 on page CS-17* and to then identify the relevant/irrelevant information in Step 3 on page CS-18.* Call participants' attention to the fact that, in actual practice, teams usually revise their conclusions of what information is relevant, based on an analysis of newly gathered data at each checkpoint. After participants have completed this task, ask them to share their conclusions with the large group.

Based on the revised hypotheses given in Step 4 of page CS-18, direct the teams to Step 5 on page CS-19; further, point out the natural connection and progression from Step 5 to Steps 6 and 7. Ask participants to formulate reflective questions designed to verify or disprove these revised hypotheses in Step 5 on page CS-19*. Develop the next steps they would take in assessing Tommy by completing Steps 6 and 7 on page CS-20*. When they have completed these steps, discuss their responses; at the close of this discussion, direct their attention to Step 8, emphasizing again the need to be specific in setting a date and time for the next checkpoint.

CASE STUDY

Narrative of the Entry Phase of the Instructional Assessment Process

Keypoints:

A. The process and the procedures of instructional assessment remain the same regardless of the area of concern.

B. At each checkpoint, the following steps are followed:

1. Review the data.
2. Organize the existing data according to the instructional environment variables. Check to insure there is a balance of data among the instructional variables.
3. Identify relevant/irrelevant data. Determine what data are important to focus on for this case.
4. Decide which instructional variables may be related and how they may be affecting one another.
    - Look at the variables across settings and over time
    - Generate hypotheses regarding the interrelationships among the variables
5. Formulate reflective questions and determine what data are necessary to answer them and subsequently increase the accuracy of the hypotheses.
6. Decide how the missing data will be collected and documented.
7. Identify who will collect the missing data.
8. Set the next checkpoint.

C. The integrity of the reflective questions is dependent upon the background knowledge of team members. It is imperative that teams be composed of people who represent a wide range of backgrounds. If a school counselor is not available, a school psychologist, mental health counselor or other person with similar knowledge may be available to consult with the team.

D. The reflective questions formulated will be unique for each case. Rather than providing standard questions, examples are provided in this manual to help teach this process.

Case Study - Tommy

1. Student: Tommy
    Grade: Second Grade
    Age: Seven years old
2. Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Short
3. Grandmother: Mrs. Zinn
4. Support Teacher: Mr. Conners
5. School Counselor: Mrs. Bruckner
6. Principal: Mr. Kaufman

Case Study - Tommy

Checkpoint Structure
Entry Phase

Request for Assistance: Concern	Mrs. Short, Tommy's second grade teacher, made the request for assistance. She reported that Tommy seems very angry. He hits, kicks, speaks out inappropriately and is often noncompliant. She also reported that Tommy is in danger of failing subjects in the language arts area. She feels that she needs the support of the Instructional Support Team because her individual efforts do not seem to be working.
Parent Contact	Mrs. Short indicated that she has had several phone conversations with Tommy's grandmother Mrs. Zinn, with whom Tommy lives. She has never met Mr. Zinn. Mrs. Short reports that Mrs. Zinn is very cooperative but, at times, has difficulty following through.
Interventions that have been tried and Tommy's response to the interventions.	Mrs. Short has given Tommy clear, direct messages to stop hitting and to never hit again. Tommy tries; however, he seems to get so angry that he forgets to think. She has called Mrs. Zinn. There is no change noted in Tommy's behavior after a phone call. She has talked to Mrs. Bruckner for ideas of strategies. She tried the happy chart for Tommy to record when he has had days with no negative incidents. Keeping the charts appeared to work only for a short amount of time.
The principal reviewed the request for assistance with Mrs. Short. Both agreed that the Level III/ Instructional Support Team process should be started.	Mrs. Short called Mr. and Mrs. Zinn to notify them that Tommy will be given the support of the Instructional Support Team. She explained the IST process and indicated that she will also send the school's IST brochure.

Checkpoint Structure
First Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Team Members Present:	Mrs. Short, 2nd grade teacher Mrs. Bruckner, school counselor Mr. Conners, support teacher Mr. Kaufman, principal	Recorder: Mr. Conners volunteered to be the recorder for this checkpoint.
Meeting Location:	School counselor's office	
Time of Day:	After school	
Length of Meeting:	Thirty minutes	
Procedure:	The team followed the 8-step checkpoint structure.	

Step 1.

The team reviews the existing data.

Tommy received average grades in kindergarten and first grade. Bus reports indicated that over the past two years, four incidents of aggressive behavior, such as pushing children out of their seats, were documented.

Tommy is an only child who has lived with his maternal grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Zinn since infancy. Tommy has sporadic contact with his mother and no contact with his father who is in prison.

Attendance - 0 absences in kindergarten and first grade
0 absences in the first half of second grade (it is January of the school year)

Medical history does not indicate any areas of concern.

Vision and hearing are noted as within normal limits.
Speech and language development is within normal limits.
Gross motor skills are adequate.
Fine motor skills are slightly delayed.

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Checkpoint Structure
First Checkpoint - Entry Phase

	Curricular	Instructional	Student	Environmental
Step 2. The team organizes the data across the variable areas.			Average grades in K & 1st grade Bus Reports: 4 in past 2 years (Aggressive behavior) Attendance: 0 Absences - K, 1st, 2nd Medical History - OK Vision, S&L, Hearing, Gross Motor - OK Fine motor skills - slightly delayed	Has lived with maternal grandparents since infancy No contact with father Sporadic contact with mother Only child

Checkpoint Structure
First Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 3. The team identifies relevant/irrelevant data.	At this point in time all data appear to be relevant. The team sees a relationship between Tommy's acting-out behavior and his falling grades.
Step 4. The team • looks for relationships among the data and • hypothesizes about the presenting concern.	In the process of reviewing the data, categorizing them across variable areas, and formulating reflective questions, team members realized they had generated initial hypotheses about the problems. Their first hypotheses regarding why Tommy is having difficulty in school were: Hypotheses #1: Something major has happened at home to upset Tommy. Hypotheses #2: Since he did well in kindergarten and first grade, there may be an issue of teacher/student interactions, personalities, etc. Hypotheses #3: The level of the curricular material may be beyond his appropriate level of challenge; therefore, he is experiencing and acting out his frustration.

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Checkpoint Structure
First Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 5.

The team formulates reflective questions and determines what data are needed to answer them and/or to test the hypotheses.

Reflective questions - From these hypotheses, the following reflective questions were formulated: (As the team formulated these questions, some information was supplied by team members at the meeting.)

1. Is Tommy working at his instructional level in language arts? How do his organizational skills, study skills and/or work habits affect his performance?

   (Mrs. Short reported that she believes that Tommy is working at his instructional level; however, his work habits, organizational skills and study skills appear to have a negative impact on his grades.)

2. Why is Tommy failing second grade after having average grades in kindergarten and first grade? Has something happened outside of school that could be contributing to this change in performance?

   (None of the team members present had any information on what could have changed at home. There did not appear to be any significant changes in school, although Mrs. Short was unsure of the impact of their communication.)

3. What behaviors are observed when Tommy is angry? How do his classmates respond to Tommy's outbursts? Are there identifiable antecedents to the behavior? Where, when, what time of day, and how often do the outbursts occur? How intense are the outbursts?

   (Mrs. Short reported that when Tommy gets angry, his face turns red and he rips paper and shouts inappropriate language. She could not report on antecedents of behavior, exact environments in which the outbursts occur, how often they occur and what time of day they usually occur.)

4. What effect does Tommy's fine motor skill delay have on his classroom performance?

   (Fine motor skills: Mrs. Short observed that when Tommy does complete his work, she cannot decipher his handwriting. He rushes any task that requires him to write.)

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Step 5. (continued)

5. How did Tommy come to live with Mr. and Mrs. Zinn and what is the impact of the "loss" of his parents?

(Mrs. Short reported that she did not know under what circumstances Tommy came to live with Mr. and Mrs. Zinn. Tommy's mother schedules contact twice a month; however, she often and unpredictably does not show. Mrs. Short has also heard that his mother calls him often at home; however, the content of the phone calls seems to undermine Mr. and Mrs. Zinn's parenting efforts.)

Checkpoint Structure
First Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 6. The team decides how to collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

Step 7. The team decides who will collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

These are the reflective questions/ missing data from Step 5.	Step 6. How to collect the relevant data?:	Step 7. Who will collect the data?:
1. Is Tommy working at his instructional level in language arts? How do his organizational skills, study skills and/or work habits affect his performance?	Curriculum-based assessment (1 to 1 setting) Systematic observation: 1) academic learning time in language arts and 2) quick observation in other academic areas Review of work samples	• Support teacher • Support teacher • Classroom teacher
2. Why is Tommy failing second grade after having average grades in kindergarten and first grade? Has something happened outside of school that could be contributing to this change in performance?	Interview grandparents Discussion on communication patterns in the classroom and other learning variables	• School counselor • Support teacher and classroom teacher
3. What behaviors are observed when Tommy is angry? How do his classmates respond to Tommy's outbursts? Are there identifiable antecedents to the behavior? Where, when, what time of day and how often do the outbursts occur? How intense are the outbursts?	Observations to determine time frame for systematic observations Systematic observations	• Classroom teacher will keep frequency count and time of day. • Support teacher will conduct subsequent systematic observations.
4. What effect does Tommy's fine motor skill delay have on his classroom performance?	To add to the teacher's observations - request an occupational therapy (OT) screening	• Physical education teacher/ Occupational therapist
5. How did Tommy come to live with Mr. and Mrs. Zinn and what is the impact of the "loss" of his parents?	Interview with grandparents Interview with Tommy	• School counselor

8. The team sets the next checkpoint.

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Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Team members present:	Mrs. Bruckner, school counselor Mr. Conners, support teacher Mrs. Short, 2nd grade teacher	Recorder: Will be in charge of getting notes to classroom teacher and principal
Meeting Location:	School counselor's office	Mr. Conners continued to be the recorder at the second checkpoint.
Time of Day:	1:20 - 1:40 P.M.	
Length of Meeting	Twenty minutes	
Procedure:	The team followed the Eight-Step Checkpoint Structure.	

Step 1. The team reviews the new data and incorporates it into the data that existed at the end of the first checkpoint meeting.	New data are reported using the framework of the reflective questions and the instructional variables format. As team members started to collect the data, the questions started to collapse in on one another, and an answer to one question led to an answer for another question. 1. Mr. Conners conducted a curriculum-based assessment in reading in a 1 to 1 situation. Using the seven essential reading questions as his guideline for the CBA, results indicated that the curricular materials used to teach Tommy were well within his range of acceptable challenge. The systematic observation used to assess the instructional variables of task structure/grouping and the student variables of organizational skills, work habits and study skills revealed that Tommy demonstrates positive skills in all these areas when he is working in whole group and 1 to 1 situations; however, his performance in small groups revealed high off-task behavior, high task incompletion and low task comprehension. Mrs. Short reviewed Tommy's work samples and found that his written work is not very neat. Tommy rushes through his work and does not check his answers. His small-group seat work is incomplete on an average of 50% of the time. Of the work completed, less than 50% is correct. However, when he is in a large-group, teacher-directed activity, or 1 to 1 with the teacher, his completion rate and comprehension percentage are higher. 2. Mrs. Bruckner gathered information needed to answer questions #2 & 5. She reported that she started discussions with Mrs. Zinn a day after the initial checkpoint meeting. As a result of these discussions, the counselor found out the following information:

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Step 1. (continued)

- Tommy came to live with his grandparents Mr. and Mrs. Zinn at two months of age.
- Tommy's mother ran off with a new boyfriend at that time.
- Tommy has never met his father and has no contact with him. The father went to prison when Tommy was 1 year old.
- Tommy's mother calls sporadically and promises to visit, but rarely follows through. Her calls upset Tommy.
- Mrs. Zinn says that she has always had trouble controlling Tommy's behavior, however nothing unusual has happened lately.
- On a typical day, Tommy comes home from school and immediately goes outside to play. Sometimes she can't get him in for supper. She is not sure what he is doing outside; they live on a farm and he does not have anyone with which to play.
- Mr. Zinn does not have much time for Tommy as he is usually working in the field or his workshop. When he talks to Tommy, it is usually in a harsh tone and he has, on occasion, spanked him. His classmates basically ignored him and kept working.

3. Mr. Conners observed Tommy in language arts class during a small group activity. Tommy's group seemed to be working well together until a decision needed to be made. The group tried to convince Tommy to vote with them, but he was not agreeing. They proceeded anyway. Tommy then became agitated and yelled at them and began tearing up his papers and pushing them onto the floor. His classmates basically ignored him and kept working.

   In addition, Mr. Conners and Mrs. Short looked at the existing typical task structure/grouping that exists in the classroom. A cooperative, small group structure is used approximately 60% of the time in the language arts curriculum. Math was taught primarily using whole-group instruction with practice done as an individual activity.

4. The physical education teacher reported that Tommy has good large muscle control. He can swing a bat, crawl, run, and climb. The occupational therapist confirmed that Tommy's small muscle and fine motor skills are slightly delayed. With patience and coaching, Tommy is able to neatly write his name and a short dictation.

5. By talking to Tommy, Mrs. Bruckner learned the following information:
   - Tommy reported that his grandfather is his dad. He really loves his grandfather.
   - He misses his mother. He said, "She's the best mom in the world."
   - Tommy's favorite relative is his uncle, but his grandmother doesn't like him to see his uncle much because sometimes he goes to jail.

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Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 2.	Curriculum	Instructional	Student	Environmental
The team organizes the data across the variable areas.				

Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 3. The team identifies relevant/irrelevant data.	Relevant data are observation findings, social information and interview reports. Irrelevant data are medical issues and CBA information. An acting-out child is now appearing to be a frustrated child. An academic issue is now looking like a social skills issue that manifests itself in an academic problem.
Step 4. The team • looks for relationships among the data and • hypothesizes about the presenting concern.	Revised hypothesis #1. Interviews have revealed that nothing traumatic has recently happened in school or at home. Tommy may be dealing with an accumulative effect of the stressors with which he has lived. He lacks stress management skills to deal with the ongoing stress that exists in his life. Revised hypothesis #2. Observations and interviews have provided data that show there is no personality conflict between Mrs. Short and Tommy. Their communication and interactions are clear and appropriate. Another hypothesis is that Tommy does not have a positive and connected male role model in his life. Developmental theory indicates that little boys around the age of seven have a great need for their dads, so this environmental issue may be contributing to his lack of social connection. Revised hypothesis #3. Observations lead the team to believe that Tommy's acting-out behavior may be related to a deficit in social skills since he is disorganized and lacks positive work habits. There may also be a self-esteem issue: if Tommy lacks the social skills to develop friendships, he may not experience connectedness or affiliation with his peers.

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Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 5.

The team formulates reflective questions and determines what data are needed to answer them and/or to test the hypotheses.

Reflective questions - From the revised hypotheses, the following reflective questions were formulated:

1. What is Tommy's perception of how he is accepted in the classroom? Does he feel connected to his classmates? Does he feel he has friends?
2. Does Tommy know how to resolve conflict? Can he identify and label feelings?
3. Is there any male role model in his life? Is there anyone with whom he can develop a nurturing, positive relationship?
4. What does Tommy do during his leisure time? What opportunities does he have to play with other children outside of the school environment?
5. How does Mr. Zinn's communication style affect Tommy?

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Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 6. The team decides how to collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

Step 7. The team decides who will collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

These are the reflective questions/ missing data from Step 5.	Step 6. How to collect the relevant data?:	Step 7. Who will collect the data?:
1. What is Tommy's perception of how he is accepted in the classroom? Does he feel connected to his classmates? Does he feel he has friends?		
2. Does Tommy know how to resolve conflict? Can Tommy identify and label feelings?		
3. Is there any male role model in his life? Is there anyone with whom he can develop a nurturing, positive relationship?		
4. What does Tommy do during his leisure time? What opportunities does he have to play with other children outside of the school environment?		
5. How does Mr. Zinn's communication style affect Tommy?		

8. The team sets the next checkpoint.

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Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Team Members Present:
Mrs. Short, 2nd Grade Teacher
Mrs. Bruckner, School Counselor
Mr. Conners, Support Teacher
Mr. Kaufman, Principal

Recorder: Will be in charge of getting notes to classroom teacher and principal.

Meeting Location: Principal's Office

Time of Day: Before School

Length of Meeting: Twenty Minutes

Procedure: The team followed the Eight-Step Checkpoint Structure.

Step 1.

The team reviews the new data and incorporates it into the data that existed by the end of second checkpoint meeting.

1. Mrs. Bruckner interviewed Tommy. Mrs. Short interviewed Mrs. Zinn. These interviews resulted in the following data:

   - Tommy said that he really likes the kids in his room, but he thinks that they do not like him. They are always bossing him around.
   - He feels mad when he has to work in groups with other kids because they never listen to him.
   - Tommy reported that if the kids don't listen to him, he won't listen to them.

2. Based on the interview, it appeared that Tommy can label feelings when he sees pictures of different feeling faces; however, he did not seem to be in touch with his own feelings. His two most common responses to his own feelings were "I'm mad" and "I don't care."

   When given a conflict example related to school and asked how he would resolve it, Tommy said he would figure out a way to get back at the other student. He said he yells at other children when he doesn't like what they do. He was unable to state how he feels in such situations and suggest a possible positive solution.

   Mrs. Zinn said she really didn't know much about how Tommy solves problems. She indicated that he does talk back to her quite a bit. When Mr. Zinn corrects Tommy, it is usually in a harsh tone. Tommy then "disappears" for a while, and when he returns, he remains quiet.

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Step 1. (continued)

3. Right now the only men in Tommy's life are his grandfather and the teachers and principal at school. His father is in prison and his uncle is frequently in and out of jail. Tommy doesn't belong to any social groups or church organizations where there might be a good male model for him.

4. Tommy said he spends his leisure time at home playing by himself. He reported that his grandfather does not want any other kids around the farm bothering him. When asked directly, Tommy said that sometimes he is lonely, but he likes living on the farm. He rides his bike, plays in the pond, and digs underground houses, etc.

   An interview with Mrs. Zinn confirmed that Tommy does not have many neighborhood friends. On the farm he is mostly by himself. She also confirmed that her husband does not want other children around.

5. As stated in #2, Tommy reacts to Mr. Zinn's harsh tone by "disappearing." When he rejoins the family, he is very quiet.

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Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 2.	Curricular	Instructional	Student	Environmental
The team organizes the data across the variable areas.				

Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 3. The team identifies relevant/irrelevant data.	Relevant information includes: Irrelevant information includes:
Step 4. The team • looks for relationships among the data and • hypothesizes about the presenting concern.	Hypothesis #1 is now seen this way: Tommy's coping skills are not developed and with constant stressors in his life, he does not have the opportunity to learn them. Hypothesis #2 stands as it was since no new data were added. This hypothesis is that Tommy does not have a positive, connected, male role model in his life. Developmental theory indicates that little boys around the age of seven have a great need for their dads; therefore, this environmental issue may be contributing to his lack of social connection. Hypothesis #3 is now seen this way: When in cooperative groups which require social interaction skills, Tommy looks disorganized. However, it is hypothesized that his lack of social skills interferes with his finishing his school work, thus resulting in acting-out behavior and decreased academic performance.

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Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 5. The team formulates reflective questions and determines what data are needed to answer them and/or to test the hypotheses.	Reflective questions: From these revised hypotheses, reflective questions can now be formulated that relate to manipulating critical variables in order to create positive conditions of learning:

Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 6. The team decides how to collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

Step 7. The team decides who will collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

These are the reflective questions/ missing data from Step 5.	Step 6. How to collect the relevant data?:	Step 7. Who will collect the data?:

Step 8: The team sets the next checkpoint.

Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 2.	Curriculum	Instructional	Student	Environmental
The team organizes the data across the variable areas.	CBA in reading indicates materials are within Tommy's range Tommy is off task in small group activities High incompletion Low comprehension	1 to 1 is okay Small group setting for 60% of LA class Math is in whole-group setting Tommy is off task in small group activities	Good work skills in whole-group settings and 1 to 1 Observations reveal good work habits and skills in 1 to 1 situations	With grandparents since he was 2 months old Mother ran off with new boyfriend Mother is inconsistent Tommy never met his father Father is in prison Uncle is in jail

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Checkpoint Structure
Second Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 6. The team decides how to collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

Step 7. The team decides who will collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

These are the reflective questions/ missing data from Step 5.	Step 6. How to collect the relevant data?:	Step 7. Who will collect the data?:
1. What is Tommy's perception of how he is accepted in the classroom? Does he feel connected to his classmates? Does he feel he has friends?	*Interview with Tommy* *Sociogram*	*Guidance counselor* *Classroom teacher*
2. Does Tommy know how to resolve conflict? Can Tommy identify and label feelings?	*Discussion with the classroom teacher* *Observation on the playground*	*Support teacher* *Playground aide*
3. Is there any male role model in his life? Is there anyone with whom he can develop a nurturing, positive relationship?	*Discussion with the grandparents*	*Guidance counselor*
4. What does Tommy do during his leisure time? What opportunities does he have to play with other children outside of the school environment?	*Interest survey* *Discussion with the grandmother*	*Classroom teacher* *Guidance counselor*
5. How does Mr. Zinn's communication style affect Tommy?	*Interview with Tommy* *Discussion with the grandmother*	*Guidance counselor* *Guidance counselor*

8. The team sets the next checkpoint.

Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 2.	Curricular	Instructional	Student	Environmental
The team organizes the data across the variable areas.	No new information was gathered.	No new information was gathered.	Tommy likes the kids in his room. He feels mad. He is angry. He has poor conflict resolution skills.	Tommy runs and hides when disciplined by his grandfather. Grandmother has trouble disciplining Tommy.

Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 3. The team identifies relevant/irrelevant data.	Relevant information includes: *Tommy likes the kids in his room, but they boss him around.* *Tommy feels mad when he has to work with others.* *Mrs. Zinn indicates that Tommy talks back to her and retreats from Mr. Zinn.* Irrelevant information includes: *Tommy's uncle is in and out of jail.*
Step 4. The team • looks for relationships among the data and • hypothesizes about the presenting concern.	Hypothesis #1 is now seen this way: Tommy experiences constant stressors in his life, and has not developed coping skills to effectively deal with these stressors. Hypothesis #2 stands as it was since no new data were added. This hypothesis is that Tommy does not have a positive, connected, male role model in his life. Developmental theory indicates that little boys around the age of seven have a great need for their dads; therefore, this environmental issue may be contributing to his lack of social connection. Hypothesis #3 is now seen this way: When in cooperative groups which require social interaction skills, Tommy looks disorganized. However, it is hypothesized that his lack of social skills interferes with his finishing his school work, thus resulting in acting-out behavior and decreased academic performance.

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Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase
(Moving into the Hypothesis-Forming

Step 5. The team formulates reflective questions and determines what data are needed to answer them and/or to test the hypotheses.	Reflective questions: From these revised hypotheses, reflective questions can now be formulated that relate to manipulating critical variables in order to create positive conditions of learning: *1. What kind of social groups can Tommy be involved with?* *2. What strategies can be used to get Tommy organized?* *3. What kind of assistance can be provided for the home?* *4. Can a positive male role model be provided?* *5. Can Tommy be enrolled in the school peer mediation training?*

Checkpoint Structure
Third Checkpoint - Entry Phase

Step 6. The team decides how to collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

Step 7. The team decides who will collect the missing data relevant to each reflective question. (see below)

These are the reflective questions/ missing data from Step 5.	Step 6. How to collect the relevant data?:	Step 7. Who will collect the data?:
1. *What kind of social groups can Tommy be involved with?*	*Check the directory of services.*	*Guidance counselor*
2. *What strategies can be used to get Tommy organized?*	*Look into ADAPT organizers.* *Consult with the LS teacher.*	*Support teacher*
3. *What kind of assistance can be provided for the home?*	*Invite grandparents for a conference.*	*Principal*
4. *Can a positive male role model be provided?*	*Ask the physical education teacher to fulfill this role.*	*Classroom teacher*
5. *Can Tommy be enrolled in the school peer mediation training?*	*Contact the principal to enroll Tommy in the training.*	*Classroom teacher* *Principal* *Playground aide*

Step 8. The team sets the next checkpoint.

I. Curricular Variables

- a. Level of Curricular Material
- b. Instructional Pace
- c. Relevant Practice Provided
- d. Mode of Task Presentation
- e. Mode of Student Response
- f. Scope and Sequence of Tasks
- g. Criterion for Student Success

Oh #CS-1

II. Instructional Variables

a. Direct Instruction Time

b. Allocation of Engaged Time

c. Degree of Task Structure/Grouping

d. Guided and Independent Practice

e. Meaningful Opportunities to Respond

f. Amount and Type of Feedback

g. Amount and Type of Cues and Prompts

Oh #CS-2

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III. Student Performance Variables

- a. Time on Task
- b. Task Completion
- c. Task Comprehension
- d. Organizational Skills
- e. Metacognitive Skills
- f. Work Habits
- g. Functional/Behavioral Strategies
- h. Coping Skills Strategies
- i. Social Skills

Oh #CS-3

IV. Environmental Variables

a. Expectations

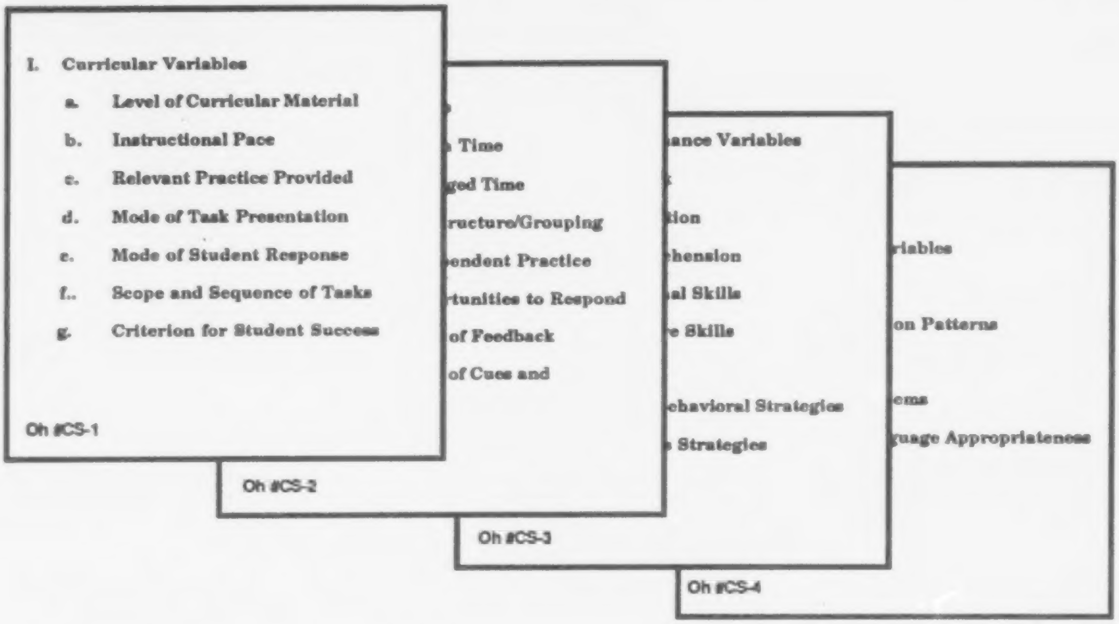
b. Communication Patterns

c. Stressors

d. Support Systems

e. Cultural/Language Appropriateness

Oh #CS-4



I. **Curricular Variables**

- a. **Level of Curricular Material**
- b. **Instructional Pace**
- c. **Relevant Practice Provided**
- d. **Mode of Task Presentation**
- e. **Mode of Student Response**
- f.. **Scope and Sequence of Tasks**
- g. **Criterion for Student Success**

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Training Suggestions

Show each overhead to guide the discussion on instructional environment variables. A handout titled "Instructional Environment Variables" is provided for the participants' use and covers the same information on the overheads.

These variable areas are identified in educational research and literature as general areas that influence a student's learning and school performance (for example, Brophy, 1986; Dweck, 1986; Gickling, 1981; Rosenfield, 1987; Ysseldyke, Christenson & Kovaleski, 1994; Ysseldyke & Christenson, 1993-1994). The examples given here in each area are not presented as a conclusive listing; rather, they serve as a guide for investigation. For any specific student being considered for instructional support, a team may identify these variables, or others not listed here, as ones that have significant relevance for the student and should be systematically assessed.

Follow this discussion with the triangle graphic (OVERHEAD #CS-5) to illustrate the interaction among the areas of instructional environment variables. Depending on time constraints or needs of the teams, ask participants for a practical example of one or more of the variables under each heading.

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Instructional Environment Variables

I. Curricular Variables

- a. Level of Curricular Material
- b. Instructional Pace
- c. Practice Provided
- d. Mode of Task Presentation
- e. Mode of Student Response
- f. Scope and Sequence of Tasks
- g. Criterion for Student Success

II. Instructional Variables

- a. Direct Instruction Time
- b. Allocation of Engaged Time
- c. Degree of Task Structure/Grouping
- d. Guided and Independent Practice
- e. Opportunities to Respond
- f. Feedback
- g. Cues and Prompts

III. Student Performance Variables

- a. Academic Learning Time
  - 1. Time on task
  - 2. Task Completion
  - 3. Task comprehension

- b. Student Strategies
  - 1. Organizational Skills
  - 2. Metacognitive Skills
  - 3. Work Habits

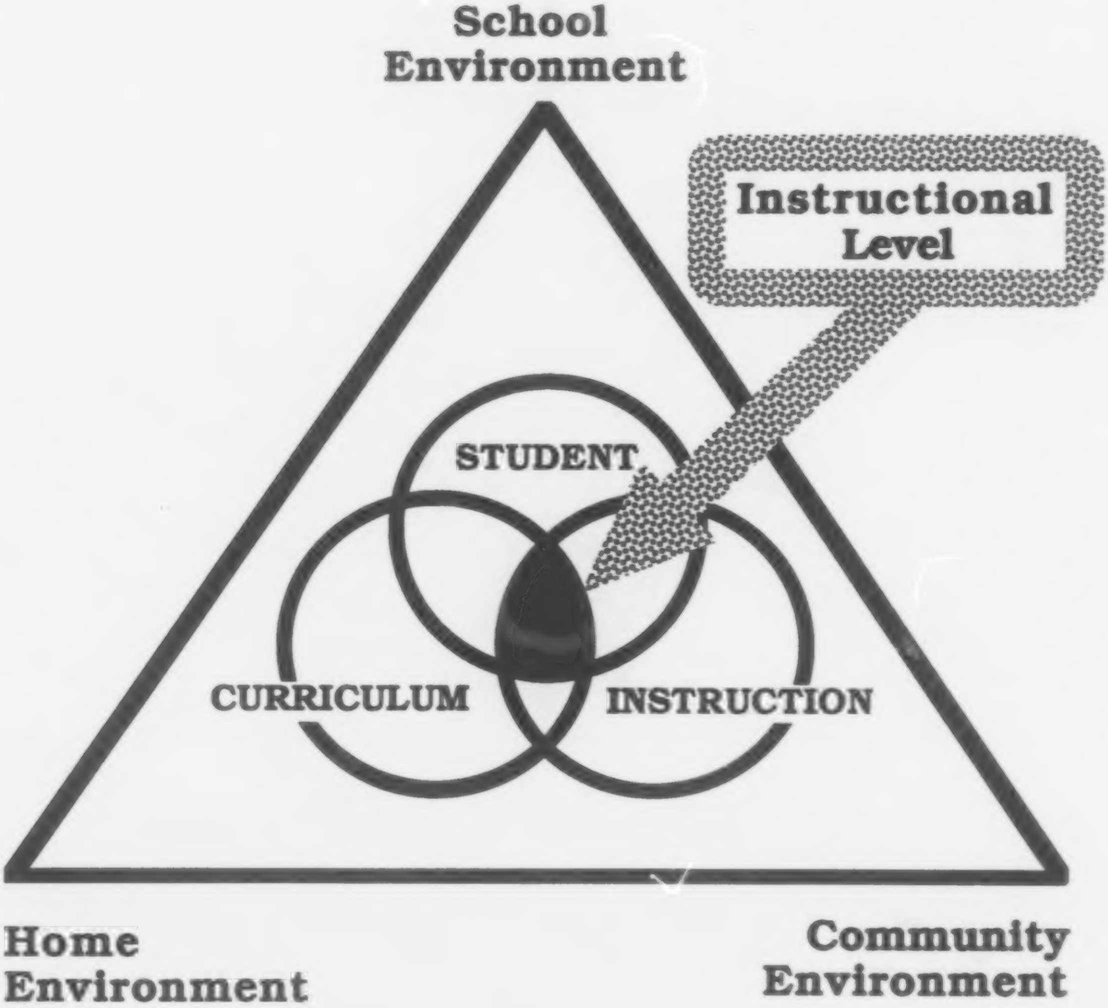
- c. Behavioral/Affective
  - 1. Functional/Behavioral Strategies
  - 2. Coping Skills Strategies
  - 3. Social Skills

IV. Environmental Variables

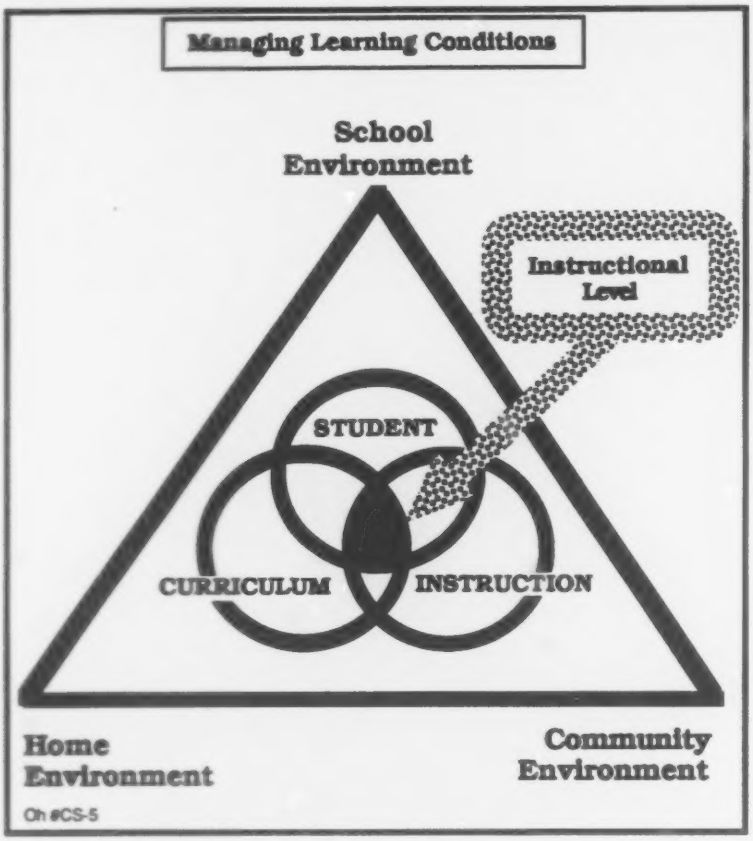
- a. Expectations
- b. Communication Patterns
- c. Stressors
- d. Support Systems
- e. Cultural/Language Appropriateness

Lowery/Stuart (1995)

Managing Learning Conditions


School Environment
Instructional Level
STUDENT
CURRICULUM
INSTRUCTION
Home Environment
Community Environment

Oh #CS-5


Managing Learning Conditions
School Environment
Instructional Level
STUDENT
CURRICULUM
INSTRUCTION
Home Environment
Community Environment
Oh #CS-5

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Training Suggestions

This overhead complements the overheads illustrating the Instructional Environment Variables by graphically depicting the interaction and relatedness of the multiple influences that affect student learning. By thoroughly investigating these influences and assessing their impact on learning, the team can make the necessary adjustments in relevant areas to establish an instructional match and ensure student success.

Refer to this overhead and ask participants to give examples from their own experience to demonstrate how, for example, a school environment factor affected a student's motivation or how an aspect of school curriculum was influenced by a community decision. By generating their own examples, participants will internalize the dynamic, interactive, and variable nature of education and ultimately of individual student learning.

APPENDIX III

ACADEMIC LEARNING TIME

ACADEMIC LEARNING TIME

Background

The Academic Learning Time (ALT) concept emerged in the late 1970's as a result of a three year Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES) conducted in California, a study whose purpose was to identify teaching activities and classroom conditions that fostered student learning in elementary schools. The intent of the BTES study was to show that learning could be measured more directly and immediately by looking at student behavior in the classroom. This measure of student learning became known as Academic Learning Time (ALT) and is defined as "the amount of time a student spends engaged in an academic task that s/he can perform with high success" (Fisher, et al., 1980, p. 8). A major finding of the BTES study was that increases in ALT were associated with increases in student achievement.

The formulation of ALT was an extension of the concept of engaged time, which appeared to be more of a quantitative than qualitative feature of the study. Success rate, however, is qualitative in nature and is intended to reflect the degree to which the student understands each learning task. Success rates were divided into three broad categories in the original BTES study. High success described situations where the student had a good grasp of the task and made errors at a chance level (careless errors). If a student did not understand the task and made correct responses at a chance level, the situation was labeled low success. Situations that fell between low and high success were defined as medium success. Medium success involved partial knowledge where the student understood enough to produce some correct responses but also committed errors. Obviously, the criteria for the three levels of success were vague.

At approximately the same time as the BTES research, Dr. Gickling and his associates were investigating the effectiveness of an instructional version of curriculum-based assessment. As with the BTES study, it was important to determine whether or not the learning conditions of low-achieving students could be substantially improved. Needing an observational instrument that could sensitively measure performance changes, Dr. Gickling and his associates devised an instrument which measured not only time-on-task and task completion rates, but more importantly, comprehension rates. It was felt that this instrument reflected and measured the intent of ALT better than the task-engagement instrument used in the original BTES study. It also allowed independent observers to view three concurrent behaviors (on-task, task completion, and task comprehension), and to record the rate for each behavior in the form of raw scores or percentage values. (Percentage values represent raw scores divided by *possible* scores.)

ALT Variables

Observations of on-task behavior, task completion, and task comprehension are used to determine a student's present level of functioning within the classroom. ALT variables can also be used to confirm that the learning and instructional conditions are right for optimal progress. ALT measurement, therefore, can serve as a useful monitoring tool.

On-task. On-task rates represent the percentage of time a student is actually engaged in a task-related activity. Scores are obtained by taking one 10-second sample per student every 30 seconds for a total of 20 observations per student per observation session. This sequence permits observation of three students (one target and two comparison students) every 30 seconds, for a total observation session of approximately 10 minutes. Examples of on-task and off-task behavior are as follows:

On-task

- eyes focused on work
- body facing work and touching chair
- receiving teacher assistance
- taking books or related work out of desk
- raising hand for assistance or to participate in class
- performing paper and pencil exercises
- active reading (eyes focused on work and moving left to right)

Off-task

- eyes focused away from work longer than 5 seconds
- talking to other students on non-subject areas
- walking around the classroom
- body turned away from work or not touching chair
- playing with objects or materials not assigned

Task completion. Completion rates represent the number of items attempted per task over the total number required to complete the task. This rate is not used to judge comprehension nor to determine right or wrong responses; it is merely used to judge the amount of response effort made by the student. If the task requires more than one period to complete, the observer will need to consult the classroom teacher as to how much of the task is to be completed during the particular time frame. The completion rate, in this case, represents the number of responses attempted compared to the teacher's expectancy.

Task comprehension. Comprehension rates represent the sampled items correctly identified or understood on a particular task. The content area and purpose of the assigned task are important issues in determining this score. For example, if the purpose of the assignment is to use spelling words in context, then being able to read the words as well as spell them becomes the focus on the comprehension questions. In each case, meaning or understanding is the major factor in determining comprehension. Comprehension rates are obtained by directly questioning each student about the assigned task. The type of task dictates the number and types of questions asked.

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